

201 M15p

68-13876

Macintosh

The problem of religious knowledge



kansas city



public library

kansas city, missouri

Books will be issued only
on presentation of library card.

Please report lost cards and
change of residence promptly.

Card holders are responsible for
all books, records, films, pictures
or other library materials
checked out on their cards.

KANSAS CITY MO PUBLIC LIBRARY



THE PROBLEM
OF RELIGIOUS KNOWLEDGE



THE PROBLEM OF RELIGIOUS KNOWLEDGE

DOUGLAS CLYDE MACINTOSH

DWIGHT PROFESSOR OF THEOLOGY
AND PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION
IN YALE UNIVERSITY



HARPER & BROTHERS PUBLISHERS

New York

London

THE PROBLEM OF RELIGIOUS KNOWLEDGE

Copyright, 1940, by Harper & Brothers

Printed in the United States of America

All rights in this book are reserved.

*No part of the book may be reproduced in any
manner whatsoever without written permission
except in the case of brief quotations embodied
in critical articles and reviews. For information
address Harper & Brothers*

FIRST EDITION

H-P

To
HOPE

KANSAS CITY (MO.) PUBLIC LIBRARY
6813876

Preface

~~~~~

This book was originally planned as a companion volume to *The Problem of Knowledge*, published twenty-five years ago, but now out of print. The philosophical position represented by both volumes and by what I have written in the intervening quarter-century may be described as idealism with respect to ideals and realism in relation to reality. In other words, I hold that there are absolute values, universally and eternally valid for persons, which values (or ideals) we can progressively learn to appreciate and realize; that reality is whatever it must be for there to be such valid values and for their realization by us to be imperative; that there are real persons, a real world of things, and an existent reality so divine in quality and function as to be a worthy object of religious trust and worship; that all of these realities, physical, humanly personal, and religious, or divine, exist independently of any ideas or subjective appearances of them; that of all these realities we can have some direct experience, from which we can gain some verified knowledge; and finally, that our limited knowledge of these various realities may be supplemented by intuitionist thinking and a belief or faith which tends to become reasonable through critical and constructive thought.

It is the religious element in this theory of knowledge which forms the subject-matter of the present volume. The author's constructive position will be found in Part III (Chapters XI, XII, XX, and XXI). Incidentally, but at such length as to make up approximately three-fourths of the contents of the book, other theories of religious knowledge, current in contemporary thought, are critically reviewed.

For convenience in referring to the various types of theory of knowledge, certain somewhat technical philosophical terms have been employed. These should not cause the reader difficulty, once the definitions of the terms used have been carefully noted. A single preliminary word of warning may be offered in connection with the use, in the titles of the four main parts of the book, of those words of many philosophical meanings, "monistic" and "dualistic." These terms as here employed are to be taken exclusively in the sense which they bear in current discussions of the problem of knowledge, namely as meaning that the object consciously experienced and the object existing independently of experience are, according to dualism, two wholly different existences, and, according to

monism, existentially one and numerically the same, at least in part and sufficiently for some knowledge of the independently existing reality to be humanly possible.

It remains only to add a word of explanation and comment with reference to the dedication, which, as our friends will recognize, is to my wife, Hope Conklin Macintosh, on this our anniversary day. At the same time the inscription is meant to be symbolical of an attitude, possible and recommended, in the present darkly ominous world-situation. Apart from the contribution which religion at its best is able to make to the ultimate solution of the world's problems, it is indeed hard to be optimistic. One cannot but wonder sceptically whether the use of force in international relations in order to "put an end to the use of force in international relations" is likely to prove any more effective in 1940 than was the "war to end war" in 1914 to 1918. If the encouragement of steadfast hope is to be reasonably maintained, must we not have recourse to something better than the attempt to overcome evil with evil? Timely as well as ever true are the lines, reminiscent of Bunyan's Christian, Standfast, Greatheart, and Valiant-for-Truth:

"He who would valiant be  
'Gainst all disaster,  
Let him in constancy  
Follow the Master."

The course recommended and followed by the Master himself under not very dissimilar circumstances was to render to Caesar the things that were Caesar's, and to God the things that were God's. What "Caesar" requires or may yet require of us we may not surely know; but, whatever it may turn out to be, we must not suffer it to interfere with our rendering to God the things that are eternally his. If we are to give God's holy will and God's redemptive power their rightful place, we must begin with the repentant self-surrender and responsive faith involved in what we call, in the succeeding pages, the right religious adjustment. This attitude, steadfastly maintained, will condition in the individual and, if made sufficiently widespread, in the social whole a religious experience of moral regeneration and a progressive emancipation from evil. It will accomplish this through the development and expression of righteousness and unselfish love in individual lives and social relations, especially if it is guided by tact and by essentially scientific knowledge of necessary ways and means.

Toward this religious experience of moral and social salvation definite empirical religious knowledge and a reasonable and vitally inspiring religious faith are or obviously would be potentially instrumental. It is the constructive thesis of this book that such religious knowledge as we

need is accessible and that such certitude of religious faith as is most desirable for the supplementing of that knowledge is also reasonably attainable. It may thus claim to be, in its ultimate significance, a message of hope.

D. C. M.

Breadalbane,  
Glengarry, Canada,  
July 1, 1940.



## *Table of Chapters*

|                                                                         |     |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| PREFACE                                                                 | vii |
| I. INTRODUCTORY: PRINCIPLES OF KNOWLEDGE IN GENERAL                     | I   |
| PART I. EXTREME MONISTIC REALISM IN RELIGION                            |     |
| II. THE MYSTICAL THEORY OF RELIGIOUS KNOWLEDGE                          | 15  |
| III. CRITICAL EVALUATION OF RELIGIOUS MYSTICISM                         | 29  |
| PART II. MONISTIC IDEALISM IN RELIGION                                  |     |
| CHAPTERS IV-IX: PSYCHOLOGICAL IDEALISM IN RELIGION                      |     |
| IV. RELIGIOUS PSYCHOLOGISM                                              | 47  |
| V. PSYCHIATRIC INTERPRETATIONS OF RELIGION                              | 60  |
| VI. PHILOSOPHICAL ANTECEDENTS OF HUMANISM                               | 79  |
| VII. THEOLOGICAL ANTECEDENTS OF HUMANISM                                | 97  |
| VIII. HUMANISM AND NEAR-HUMANISM                                        | 120 |
| IX. HUMANISM, ECCLESIASTICAL AND OTHER                                  | 136 |
| X. LOGICAL AND LOGICAL-PSYCHOLOGICAL IDEALISM IN<br>RELIGION            | 147 |
| PART III. CRITICAL MONISTIC REALISM IN RELIGION                         |     |
| XI. RELIGIOUS PERCEPTION                                                | 163 |
| XII. EMPIRICAL THEOLOGY                                                 | 188 |
| PART IV. DUALISTIC REALISM IN RELIGION                                  |     |
| XIII. ARGUMENTATIVE THEISM                                              | 217 |
| XIV. RELIGIOUS AGNOSTICISM                                              | 230 |
| XV. RELIGIOUS VALUE-JUDGMENTS                                           | 243 |
| XVI. EXISTENCE-JUDGMENTS BASED ON VALUE-JUDGMENTS                       | 262 |
| XVII. CRITICAL RATIONALISM                                              | 281 |
| XVIII. RELIGIOUS PRAGMATISM                                             | 304 |
| XIX. REACTIONARY IRRATIONALISM                                          | 326 |
| PART III. ( <i>Continued</i> ) CRITICAL MONISTIC REALISM<br>IN RELIGION |     |
| XX. NORMATIVE THEOLOGY                                                  | 357 |
| XXI. METAPHYSICAL THEOLOGY                                              | 370 |



## *Analytical Table of Contents*

---

### I. INTRODUCTORY: PRINCIPLES OF KNOWLEDGE IN GENERAL (1-12).

Knowledge and truth (1-2). Theories of knowledge (2-4). Critical monism, a form of realism (5-6). Modes of thought (6-7). Knowledge of minds (7-8). Values (8-9). General idea of the philosophy of religious knowledge (9-11). Division of the subject (11-12).

### PART I: EXTREME MONISTIC REALISM IN RELIGION (13-44)

#### II. THE MYSTICAL THEORY OF RELIGIOUS KNOWLEDGE (15-28).

Naive realism in religion (15). Typical expressions of mystical experience and doctrine: views of Plotinus, Eckhart, Ruysbroeck, Tauler, Boehme, St. Catherine of Genoa, St. Catherine of Siena, Angela of Foligno, St. Teresa, St. John of the Cross, Madame Guyon, Ramakrishna, et al. (16-36): (a) Immediate inner experience of divine reality (16-17). (b) Religious illumination and certitude of God (17). (c) Ineffableness of the religious experience and of the nature of God (18-21). (d) Revelation of the unreality of matter, space, and time (21-23). (e) Absorption of the self in God; revelation of the sole reality of God and of the unreality of the finite self (23-26). (f) Revelation of the unreality of evil (26-28).

#### III. CRITICAL EVALUATION OF RELIGIOUS MYSTICISM (29-44).

The quietistic tendency (29-31). Mystical certitude (31). The rationalization of mysticism (31-33). Mystical intuition (33). Hallucinatory elements (33-34, 35-36). Mysticism and autohypnosis (35-37). Is mystical certitude knowledge or faith? (37-39). Mysticism and pathology (39-41). Mysticism and the subconscious (41-42). The practical value of mysticism (42-43). The good and the bad essence of religious mysticism (43-44).

### PART II: MONISTIC IDEALISM IN RELIGION (45-160)

#### IV-IX. PSYCHOLOGICAL IDEALISM IN RELIGION (47-146).

#### IV. RELIGIOUS PSYCHOLOGISM (47-59).

Idealism in religion versus "religious idealism" (47). Views of L. Feuerbach (48-50), F. A. Lange (50), J. H. Leuba (50-51),

E. LeRoy (51-53), H. Vaihinger (53-54), E. Durkheim (54-56), J. M. E. McTaggart (57-59), J. M. Murry (59).

V. PSYCHIATRIC INTERPRETATIONS OF RELIGION (60-78).

Views of S. Freud (60-66), A. Adler (66-68), C. G. Jung (68-73), E. D. Martin (73-75), W. Trotter (75-77), A. G. Tansley (77-78).

VI. PHILOSOPHICAL ANTECEDENTS OF HUMANISM (79-96).

Views of John Dewey (79-96).

VII. THEOLOGICAL ANTECEDENTS OF HUMANISM (97-119).

Views of George B. Foster (97-119).

VIII. HUMANISM AND NEAR-HUMANISM (120-135).

Views of Irving King (120-121), E. S. Ames (121-125), J. R. Geiger (125-126), H. C. Ackerman (126), G. B. Smith (127), A. E. Haydon (127-131), R. W. Sellars (131-133), T. V. Smith (133-134), H. W. Schneider (134), M. C. Otto (134-135).

IX. HUMANISM, ECCLESIASTICAL AND OTHER (136-146).

Views of W. Montgomery Brown (136-139), J. H. Dietrich, C. W. Reese, and C. F. Potter (139-142), W. Lippmann (142-144), J. W. Krutch (144-146), G. J. Nathan (146).

X. LOGICAL AND LOGICAL-PSYCHOLOGICAL IDEALISM IN RELIGION (147-160).

1) Logical Idealism in Religion (147-156).

Views of G. Simmel (147-148), P. Natorp (148-149), W. Windelband (149), H. Münsterberg (149-150), G. Santayana (151), A. C. McGiffert (151-152), Bertrand Russell (152-154), W. R. Inge (154-155), Kirsopp Lake (155-156).

2) Logical-Psychological Idealism in Religion (156-160).

Views of B. Croce (156-159), G. Gentile (159-160).

PART III: CRITICAL MONISTIC REALISM IN RELIGION  
(161-213; 357-382)

XI. RELIGIOUS PERCEPTION (163-187).

Appreciation of divine values and a divine factor in reality (163-165). Views of G. B. Smith (165), H. N. Wieman (164-171). The divine as conditioned by the right religious adjustment (170-173). Cumulative definition of God (173). Religious realism (173-178). Critical monism in religion (178-187). Views of Rufus M. Jones (178), W. E. Hocking (179), Baron von Hügel (179), H. Bergson (180-181), N. Kemp Smith (181), J. Baillie (181-183), J. Oman (183-185), F. E. England (185), E. W. Lyman (185-187). Verification in religion (187).



## **XII. EMPIRICAL THEOLOGY (188–213).**

The project of a scientific theology (188). Views of G. B. Smith (188–189). Historiometry (189–190). "Theology as an Empirical Science" (190–193). Discussion of criticisms by Pratt, Knudson, G. B. Smith, Fenn, Schaub, Coe, W. K. Wright, W. M. Horton, Galloway, Scullard, and Wobbermin (193–202). The laws of empirical theology (202–209): volitional (203–204), emotional (205–206), intellectual (206–207), and of physical and social well-being (208–209). Empirical knowledge of divinely functioning reality (209–210). Discussion of views of J. L. Stocks, J. W. Harvey and John Laird (210–213).

## **XX. NORMATIVE THEOLOGY (357–369).**

The need of supplementing empirical theology (357–358). Experienced divine value as norm for religious intuition and faith (358–360). The resultant doctrine of God (360–361). Growth of religious intuition and faith (361–362). Religious symbolism (362–363). Normative theology both valuational and existential (363–364). Religious pragmatism and the will to believe (364–365). The Christocentric norm (365–368). God's power and knowledge in religious intuition, in faith, and in normative theology (368–369).

## **XXI. METAPHYSICAL THEOLOGY (370–382).**

W. P. Montague and Wm. Adams Brown on the ways of knowing (370–371). Discussion in relation to revelation (371–373). Tentativeness and religious thought (373–374). Definition and methodology of metaphysics (374–375). Mutual relations of theology and metaphysics (374–376). Metaphysical problems (376–381). Metaphysical theology (381–382).

## **PART IV: DUALISTIC REALISM IN RELIGION (215–354)**

### **XIII. ARGUMENTATIVE THEISM (217–229).**

Dualism and agnosticism (217–218). Theistic argument and religious decline (218–219). St. Thomas's "five proofs" (219–220). The ontological argument (220–222). The cosmological argument (222). The anthropological argument (222). The teleological argument (222–225). Axiological arguments (225–229). Moral optimism and the reasonableness of Christianity (229).

### **XIV. RELIGIOUS AGNOSTICISM (230–242).**

Views of Henry Mansel (230–233), Herbert Spencer et al. (233–236), and F. D. E. Schleiermacher (236–242). Schleiermacher and Kant (242).

**XV. RELIGIOUS VALUE-JUDGMENTS (243-261).**

Views of Albrecht Ritschl (243-250), A. Harnack (250), Otto Ritschl (250-253), Max Reischle (254-255), T. Haering (256), W. Herrmann (256-261).

**XVI. EXISTENCE-JUDGMENTS BASED ON VALUE-JUDGMENTS (262-280).**

Views of H. Siebeck (262-264), R. A. Lipsius (264-266), J. Kaftan (266-270), M. Scheibe (270-272), G. Wobbermin (272-280).

**XVII. CRITICAL RATIONALISM (281-303).**

Views of E. Troeltsch (281-295), H. Süskind (295), J. Volkelt (296-297), Rudolf Otto (297-303).

**XVIII. RELIGIOUS PRAGMATISM (304-325).**

Pragmatism and near-pragmatism (304-306). Varieties of religious pragmatism (306-307). Views of A. J. Balfour (307-309), Wm. James (309-314), E. H. Rowland (314-316), F. C. S. Schiller (316-317), J. E. Boodin (317-318), A. K. Rogers (318-320), E. W. Lyman (320-321), E. A. Cook (321-322), H. Bois (323-325). Representational pragmatism and moral optimism (322-323).

**XIX. REACTIONARY IRRATIONALISM (326-354).**

Theocentric theology, dualistic epistemology, and irrationalism (326-327). Views of S. Kierkegaard (327-333), Unamuno (333-335), Karl Barth, E. Brunner, et al. (335-348), P. Tillich (348-350), K. Heim (350), G. Aulén (350-351), A. Nygren (351), N. Berdyaev (351-354).

THE PROBLEM  
OF RELIGIOUS KNOWLEDGE





## Chapter I

### INTRODUCTORY: PRINCIPLES OF KNOWLEDGE IN GENERAL

Philosophical consideration of the problem of religious knowledge is an important special branch of the philosophy of knowledge in general, or what is called general epistemology. It is not our purpose here and now to enter in any detail into the intricacies of current theories of knowledge in general, or even to present the arguments for the author's own views as to the solution of the general problem. But inasmuch as there is a rather close parallelism between theories in the general and in the special religious field, it would seem desirable, for the sake of clearness at least, to introduce the particular discussion of the special problem by presenting in summary form a statement of positions with reference to the general problem which the author holds and which he would be willing, on occasion, to defend.\* These are the general epistemological presuppositions of our specifically religious epistemology.

#### 1. *Knowledge*

Knowledge is adequate and adequately critical (i.e. logical) certitude of the presence of what is really present and of the truth of judgments which are really true. In other words, it includes valid perception and belief which is characterized by logical certitude. Briefly put, knowledge is certainty of the presence of reality and of the truth of judgments. Once more, knowledge is a subjective certitude of what is objectively real or true, arrived at in a way which is universally valid and adequate in degree for the just demands of practical life. It is subjective certitude critical enough to become objective certainty.

#### 2. *Truth*

Truth, or trueness, is a quality of judgments such that the idea, or predicate, represents the reality, or subject-matter of judgment, with sufficient accuracy for all the purposes which ought to be considered in

\* Cf. *The Problem of Knowledge*, Macmillan, 1915; *The Reasonableness of Christianity*, Scribners, 1925, Ch. XI; *Religious Realism*, Macmillan, 1931, pp. 329-383, especially pp. 361-374.

making the judgment, that is, in deciding between the judgment and its contradictory. Judgments can be defined as true, if and when, with adequate clearness of thought or adequate experience of the reality judged about, it would be immediately and indubitably certain that the judgment states a valid relationship of ideas to each other or to the reality which is the subject-matter of thought. In other words, whatever is or would be indubitable for logical thought, or verified, i.e., found to be real, in adequately extended experience, we may rightly depend upon as being what we call "true."

### 3. *Epistemology*

Epistemology, as we have seen that the philosophical consideration of the nature and possibility of knowledge is called, does not give us, for the first time, knowledge of reality in general; at the best it can but give us knowledge of knowledge, and this it could never do unless we had already acquired knowledge of several other things. Indeed scientific knowledge of nature and of mind may be developed to a very great extent without any question having been raised as to the nature and validity of what we call our knowledge. This is true regardless of whether epistemology can itself attain the status of knowledge or whether it must remain on the lower level—lower so far as critical assuredness is concerned—of more or less reasonable belief.

From what has been said it might appear as if the problem of knowledge were of merely academic interest and, from the point of view of real and earnest life, comparatively trivial. That this may with considerable reason be charged against the philosophical problem of knowledge in general I am not particularly concerned to dispute; but with regard to one of the particular applications of the philosophy of knowledge it would be going very wide of the mark to say that it is of no great practical importance or interest. For practical life the problem of knowledge in general is almost if not altogether negligible; but for religion, particularly in our day and among the educated and thoughtful, the problem of religious knowledge has become primary and fundamental. To point the contrast it is but necessary to refer to the present-day prestige of science in comparison with the disrepute into which, in our scientific age, theology has fallen.

Nor is the difference one of theory only. Let the scientist be as skeptical as he will in his theory of knowledge (if he has one), he may nevertheless go on acting as if things and people were real and knowable, and continue to amass a steadily increasing body of scientific information about natural and human objects. But let a person once become convinced that knowledge in the sense in which it has been defined above is impossible in the realm of religion, or in other words, that the religious

Object—divine Reality, or what we call God—is unknowable, and more likely than not he will begin to act as if he knew God to be unreal and religion itself a delusion.

This does not necessarily mean that religion at its best is less valid than human life in general, or that its Object is less real than the things and people of our everyday experience; it may only mean that religion and religious knowledge are among the later and higher achievements of evolving life. It is quite within the bounds of possibility that man should revert, temporarily at least, to the non-religious level or stage of existence. It is not the physical life which cannot be lived without a conscious and positive religious adjustment. But just as physical life involves adjustment to physical things, and social life requires adjustment to human beings, so religious life, with such value as it may come to possess, involves and for its normal development requires a conscious and positive adjustment to a religious Object regarded as real. And important as knowledge of the physical and of the social environment is for the physical and social life, so important, it would seem, is religious knowledge for the sustaining and guiding of the life of religion. Moreover, while it is knowledge of the object to which adjustment is to be made that is most important, both in life in general and in religious life in particular, and not knowledge about the knowledge itself, it remains true that to know God to be knowable would make more of a difference, practically speaking, to religion, than to know things and people to be knowable makes, or would make, to life in general. Man always will act as if natural objects and physical things were real, whatever his epistemology; it cannot be said that he will always act as if God were real, whatever his theory of religious knowledge. In the last analysis, the value of religious epistemology is the value of religion itself.

#### 4. *Epistemological Theories*

As a result of the reflection and discussion which have been bestowed upon the problem of epistemology proper in its application to objects in general, there have come to be three recognized theories, or groups of theories, to which one might suggest the addition of a fourth. In the first place, there is the view that in ordinary sense-experience we are in an immediate relation of awareness to presented sensible objects, which are correspondingly in the relation of immediate givenness to us as perceiving subjects, or minds. As commonly held, this view tends—rather dogmatically perhaps, and in spite of readily obvious difficulties—to take as characteristic of the object in its independent reality whatever sense-qualities, such as color, sound, and the like, it has been found to possess in the experience of any and every particular observer. Because of the assertion that the immediately perceived object is at the same time independently

real, this view is called realism. Because of its claim that the immediately perceived object and the independently real object are numerically one and the same existential object, and not two objects, the view is known as monistic (in opposition to the dualistic view). But since it seems to many philosophers unduly dogmatic and uncritical for this realistic monism or monistic realism to affirm that *all* the characteristics of the object as perceived belong to it in its independent reality, it has been suggested that this view be labelled dogmatic or extreme monistic realism or realistic monism.

If there should be found a place for a more critical realistic monism, or monistic realism, such as would undertake to distinguish between qualities which the object has in its independent reality and qualities which it has only when and as perceived by us, this more critical form of the realistic doctrine might be called critical realistic monism, or critical monistic realism, or critical monism for short.

A third realistic view is to the effect that there exists an object of thought and of supposed perception which remains independently real beyond the transient intervals of perception, but that the independent external reality is never the direct object of conscious experience. The immediately perceived object is, from this point of view, a second object, numerically and existentially speaking, added by consciousness to the external thing which has stimulated us and thus given rise to the phenomenal object of our sense impressions and constructive thought. Because of its assertion of the mutually exclusive duality of the immediately experienced object and the independently real object, this view is commonly called dualistic realism. Its chief problem is to find out, in view of our immediate awareness being restricted always to the mind-dependent sense-object or percept, whether there is any way in which an agnostic conclusion as to the supposedly independently existing object may be avoided.

A fourth type of theory is that which would give up, at least in relation to mind in general, the realism of positing an independently existing object or world of objects, holding instead that knowledge is possible only because in the case of perception the object is not dual but single, the knowable object of immediate experience or thought; the object supposed by realists to exist independently of its being perceived is dismissed as a mere figment of confused imagination and thought. In other words, the real object of perception is the mere percept, essentially the sort of thing an idea is. In fact, from this point of view all objects are idea in one or another sense of the word, so that as undertaking to vindicate the possibility of knowledge by getting rid not only of dualism but also of the realism of other views, this position is appropriately named idealistic monism, monistic idealism, or just idealism.



The remaining numbered sections in this introductory chapter will indicate our choice from among the four types of general epistemological theory, and therewith the general epistemological background of the theory of religious knowledge which it is proposed presently to depict.

#### 5. *Realism: the Physical World*

A real physical world exists independently of all human consciousness of it. (This is not intended to mean that there is reality of which no one is conscious, but only that if there be a mind which knows or minds which among them know all reality, the present existence of the physical world is not wholly dependent upon such mere awareness.) This excludes psychological (i.e., subjective) idealism as an epistemological theory. Realism as to the physical also stands in opposition to the other forms of epistemological idealism, namely, logical (or abstract) idealism, according to which the reality of things is identified with ideas in the sense of meanings, logical universals. Such logical ideas are essentially abstract predicates, applicable to things for purposes of representation and practical adjustment, but not including existence, which is always fundamental to meaning as an ingredient of reality. Epistemological realism also excludes any combination of logical with psychological idealism as a solution of the problem of knowledge of the physical world.

#### 6. *Monistic Realism*

In normal sense-perception physical things are presented within the field of immediate experience and observation, so that direct acquaintance with the independently existing physical world is possible and actual. In the changing complex of sense-qualities we apprehend (intuit, perceive) physical things (configurations of energy) which are not the mere complexes of related sense-qualities. Our theory is thus monistic in the purely epistemological sense of the term, according to which there can be affirmed (at least partially, i.e., to some extent) a numerical oneness, an existential identity between the object as perceived and the object as independently real.

In veridical perception we apprehend the independently existing physical thing in its appearances. In discovering to some extent what it is, we learn that it is. The essence of the thing as given in our experience is not an abstraction, but includes and involves the thing's existence. The appearance is the existent thing appearing. Through experience we gain considerable knowledge about independent reality (as in physical science), but such questions as what the independently existing thing looks like we can answer, of course, only in terms of what its appearance would be under specific conditions.

#### 7. *Intuition*

Perception, as immediate cognition of reality as present in and by

means of a complex of sensed elements (*sensa*) accompanied ordinarily by various representational elements, may be included under the more general caption of intuition, by which is meant immediate awareness of reality or truth, or of what is felt to be such. Besides perceptual intuition we may speak of other varieties of intuition. Rational intuition is immediate awareness of rational necessity, as of axioms and of the necessary truth of the logical conclusion from true premises. Appreciative intuition is immediate awareness of intrinsic, as distinguished from instrumental, value. Imaginal intuition is immediate subjective awareness, claiming or tending to claim, and generally with a strong feeling of assurance, to give the truth or a knowledge of reality otherwise than through perception, memory, testimony, or the processes of reason. In general, intuition is valuable but not infallible. Subjective appreciations are sometimes mistaken, and perceptual intuition is sometimes hallucinatory, or illusory; but imaginal intuition is in general of all forms the most fallible. It may be very fruitful, however, in suggesting ideas which can be tried out as working hypotheses and either refuted by or verified in perceptual intuition.

#### 8. *Critical Monistic Realism*

Not all that is immediately experienced in sense-perception is independently real, and not all that is independently real is immediately experienced by human subjects. On the one hand such facts as those of hallucination and color-blindness indicate that some and quite possibly all sense-qualities are conditioned by factors in the psycho-physical organism of the perceiver. On the other hand, the obvious incompleteness and growing character of our perceptual experience of the physical world indicate that there is much in reality with which we have as yet no experiential acquaintance. But it is possible to maintain that there is a core of existential or numerical identity, a partial identity or overlapping of the immediately experienced and the independently real. It is this partial identity or overlapping which makes verification possible.

#### 9. *Verification*

Reality which is not being directly presented at the time may be represented correctly by ideas, but the test of the truth of these ideas (or of the judgments in which they are used as predicates) is to be found ultimately in direct presentation. This is the fundamental principle of the scientific method of proving the truth of our judgments and extending our knowledge of reality.

#### 10. *Belief*

In addition to our verified scientific knowledge of the physical world, there is room for judgments embodying reasonable belief about reality. Within reasonable belief many degrees of reasonableness may be dis-

tinguished, varying from (a) what is almost demonstratively certain knowledge, and (b) belief which is rationally necessary in the sense of being logically involved in what may be regarded, on adequately critical grounds, not only as theoretically permissible but as practically necessary, to (c) what is merely rationally permissible, as not contradicting any known fact or anything which may be reasonably regarded as practically necessary.

### 11. *Surmise*

Much of our thinking about reality takes the form at first of more or less questionable imaginative surmise. Beyond our verified knowledge and our definitely recognized ignorance, beyond our clearly distinguished beliefs and disbeliefs, there lies a penumbra of thought, not definitely classifiable even as belief or disbelief, but only as thinking (suggestions, surmises, hypotheses) much of which may be on its way to becoming belief or disbelief, or even, in some instances, knowledge or ignorance definitely recognized as such. There is often an overlapping as between imaginal intuition and surmise, but the latter term suggests less spontaneity, less subjective certitude, and more voluntary control.

### 12. *Symbolism*

Running across these divisions of our ways of thinking (knowledge, more or less reasonable belief, and surmise) there must be recognized the familiar distinction (not to be insisted upon too absolutely) between that which should be taken literally and that which can be accepted only in a figurative, symbolical, or poetical sense, whether originally intended literally or not. However, when what was originally intended as a simple straightforward statement of factual truth is later employed in a non-literal or merely symbolical sense, it is commonly desirable, in the interests of intellectual honesty and understanding, that a clear distinction be made between the literal truth of the matter and the traditional symbolism in terms of which it may still find expression.\*

### 13. *Self-knowledge*

In addition to our direct perceptual knowledge of physical things (inorganic and organic) in complexes of sense-qualities, ideas, memory-images, and the like, we apprehend (intuit, become aware of) our own mind, or self, as that which perceives, thinks, remembers, imagines, desires, and wills. Using the term "perception" broadly, we may say that this self-knowledge is perception in an introspective complex. But we also apprehend the self in connection with various sorts of bodily behavior, as that which not only desires, intends, and wills, but also causes certain kinds of

\* Cf. my article, "Is Theology Reducible to Mythology?" *Review of Religion*, January, 1940, pp. 140-158; *ibid.*, May, 1940, pp. 434-437.

bodily behavior. Self-knowledge is thus not perception in an introspective complex alone, but perception in a complex of bodily behavior as well.

#### 14. *Knowledge of Other Minds*

Other minds, whether human or belonging to less advanced types of animal life, we apprehend not in an introspective complex, of course, but in the complex of bodily behavior and its products. But for an adequate apprehension of selves (our own and others') as persons, there are needed, in addition to this relatively simple perceptual recognition, certain elements of appreciation and of interpretation (in the light of what we know of mind and the ideal objects of mind in ourselves).\*

#### 15. *Values*

A value is a quality which anything has by virtue of its relation to an end-directed (teleological or quasi-teleological) process. Values may be classified as instrumental, terminal, and fundamental. Relatively to the process itself the *terminus ad quem* of an end-directed process has positive terminal value; its *terminus a quo* has negative terminal value. What promotes an end-directed process has positive instrumental value; what hinders it has negative instrumental value. The end-directed processes themselves, to which the values of ends and means are relative, may be evaluated or reevaluated in their turn; their value, viewed as that which determines the value of their ends and means, may be termed fundamental. Fundamental values, obviously, may be classed as positive or as negative. From the point of view of our definition it will be seen that values may be and often are independent of the appreciation of value, whether independent of conscious experience (primary values) or not (secondary values), although many values depend for their being upon their being appreciated (secondary or tertiary values).

#### 16. *Universal Values and Ideals*

In view of the obvious relativity of values, and the consequent possibility of extensive "transvaluation," the question arises as to whether there are any values which may be reasonably believed to be universally and permanently valid for persons (whether recognized as universal and final, or not). This is ultimately the question as to whether there are any processes the value of which ought to be (or can reasonably be) recognized and appreciated, as having positive worth, always, everywhere and for all. In the general process of developing personality, individually and socially, are included certain constituent processes (for example, intellectual, aesthetic, social and moral development—in a word spiritual development) which may be reasonably appreciated and their value believed in as universally and finally valid. Universal and permanent de-

\* Certain nuances of the thought expressed in paragraphs 11 and 14 I owe to the suggestion of Dr. George A. Coe.

sirability in the value of processes implies a corresponding universal and permanent validity in the value of their positive ends (*termini ad quos*), considered not as static points in a future development but rather as flying goals of a future progress, the direction rather than the absolute location of which is indicated by such ideal terms as rationality and knowledge of the truth, culture and beauty of personality, righteousness and the good will, true friendship and unselfish love. Furthermore, universal and permanent validity in processes and ends imparts a similar ultimate significance and value to their most effective, and particularly to their indispensable means.

Having thus suggested, with rather dogmatic brevity, the principles of general epistemology which seem to us valid, we must turn to our present task, the methodical consideration of the problem of religious knowledge in particular. As in general epistemology, so here our concern is with the twofold problem of direct or immediate knowledge and indirect or mediate knowledge, or, in other words, with acquaintance with and knowledge about, with the problem whether the reality in question can be presented as an object of experience and the further question as to whether we are in a position to attain, with adequate certainty, to true judgments about that reality. As would be necessary in any adequate treatment of the problem of knowledge in general, so here we shall feel required to take account of theories other than our own and to treat the subject critically as well as constructively.

There seems to be no sufficient reason to suspect that the fundamental problem of philosophical logic, namely, that of the meaning and definition of truth, will require any different treatment when intended for application in the religious field from that which should be given it in any other field of thought. What we mean when we say that any judgment is true, can be explained without taking up the question of what judgments are and what others are not true. The definition of truth offered above, if valid for general epistemology, will be valid for religious epistemology also.

The same thing may be said with reference to deductive reasoning, and the logic of mere consistency. The principles of formal logic, in the systematic setting forth of which Aristotle's *Organon* was the pioneer work, have long and all but unanimously been recognized as applying quite as much to reasoning on religious topics as in the case of thought on any other subject-matter.

There has, however, been much less readiness to apply to theological research in the field of religious experience those principles of real, or inductive logic, to a crude formulation of which in the early dawn of the modern scientific period Lord Bacon applied the term *novum organum*,

and which, as stated with greater accuracy by John Stuart Mill and his successors, have been the fruitful guides of scientific research in all empirical fields in which they have been applied. In view of this situation, special attention will have to be given to the applicability of inductive logic to religious experience in its cognitive aspect.

But before much headway can be expected in the direction of scientific religious induction, it will be necessary to consider whether or not it may be possible to formulate and to vindicate in their religious application the principles of a *tertium organum*, a logic of intuition and especially of perceptual intuition, or direct perception. This is the task of what for nearly a century now has been known as epistemology proper, the peculiar problem of which, as may be gathered from what has been said already, is the problem of the possibility of direct, knowledge-yielding experience of independently existing reality. This problem of epistemology proper is that with which, in its religious application, we shall be primarily and mainly concerned in this volume.

In connection with the critical part of our task it should be noted at the outset that our problem here is *not* that of canvassing the consequences for religion resulting from applying each of the three or four main theories of knowledge, or groups of theories, to the physical object and the physical world in general. That is a subject for treatment elsewhere.\* Our present undertaking, let me repeat, is definitely limited, in its first intention, to a critical and constructive discussion of the application of the various types of general epistemological theory to the problem of the possibility of gaining acquaintance with and knowledge of the religious object commonly called God, in and through religion in its experiential aspects. The only qualification of this statement which needs to be made is that in addition to the primary problem of the possibility of religious knowledge we shall be concerned with the possibility of supplementing whatever religious *knowledge* may turn out to be possible, by adding to it a body of reasonable religious *belief*.

It is natural and, one would suppose, highly defensible to adopt a theory of religious knowledge of the same epistemological type as the one already accepted in connection with the general problem. But as a matter of fact there is a very considerable variety of combinations, actual as well as theoretically possible, of theories of religious knowledge with more or less discrepant theories of knowledge in general. For example, one may be a direct realist in one's theory of the knowledge of the physical world, and an agnostic dualist or a subjective idealist in the field of religious epistemology. Or one may be, as we shall see presently, an immediate (monistic) realist with reference to knowledge of God and a subjectivist with

\* Cf. *The Problem of Knowledge*, Chs. VII to IX; *The Pilgrimage of Faith*, Univ. of Calcutta Press, 1931, Chs. V, VI.

reference to the world of things and finite persons. Or, one may be an agnostic dualist on both questions, or a critical monistic realist on both. These are by no means all of the possibilities in the way of combinations of like or unlike theories.

We shall not be concerned here, however, to go into any special examination of the compatibility of the theories of religious knowledge of the various authors studied with their theories of knowledge of the physical world. Each religious epistemology will be considered on its own merits. All we are concerned to point out further, before closing this introductory chapter, is that each of the four main positions in epistemology in general has its counterpart in the epistemology of religion. There exists a dogmatic or extreme monistic realism in religion according to which all the features, positive and negative, of the object of some special type of immediate religious experience are affirmed to be true of the independently existing divine reality. This type of view will be subjected to critical examination in Part One below.

At the opposite extreme, monistic idealism or idealistic monism, applied to the religious object, would mean that there is no religious object existing beyond the content of religious experience or idea. From this point of view it may be possible to claim knowledge of the religious object, but it may be questioned whether what is thus claimed is not purchased at too great a cost. Extended consideration will be given to representatives of this application of epistemological idealism in one form or another to the religious object in Part Two of our discussion.

In Part Three, as against the views considered in Part Two, we shall present constructively the main features and claims of a more critical form of the combination of a monistic with a realistic religious epistemology than that considered in Part One. Here it will be maintained that in normal and normative religious experience the reality experienced and appreciated as divine in quality and function may and does exist independently, even if it may have in that independent existence, on the one hand, qualities not experienced by us, and in our experience, on the other hand, some quality or qualities of an exclusively subjective nature. This view, because of its critical distinction between the immediately experienced and independently existing phases of one and the same divine reality, may be known as critical realistic monism or monistic realism in the religious realm, or simply as critical monism in religion.

Dualistic realism in religion, which is considered in a wide variety of forms, constitutes the subject of Part Four. Like other realistic views, epistemological dualism in religion affirms the independent reality of the religious object, but unlike the monistic realisms it would claim that there is a mutually exclusive duality of existence between the object experienced in religion and the independent reality in which the religious

man tends to believe. There is, in consequence of this dualism, a serious problem as to whether, from this point of view, there can possibly be any real knowledge of divine reality on the basis of religious experience.

The critical consideration of dualistic realism is postponed until after the first half of our constructive statement in defense of critical monism, partly because it is our purpose to distinguish sharply between what we can know in religion and what, in addition to that, we can reasonably believe, and partly because our review of dualistic religious epistemologies will be concerned not only to criticize the theoretical religious agnosticism logically bound up with the dualism, but also to discover and appreciate the principal contributions of these same dualists toward the methodology and content of the "reasonable faith" with which, on our view, our religious knowledge can be and ought to be supplemented. The methodological principles of critically intuitionist and philosophically reasonable faith will be treated in a continuation of Part Three, containing the last two chapters of the book.



PART I

EXTREME MONISTIC REALISM IN RELIGION





## Chapter II

### THE MYSTICAL THEORY OF RELIGIOUS KNOWLEDGE

---

A philosophy of religious knowledge which is to be both critical and constructive does well to begin as epistemology in general begins, namely, with a critical examination and evaluation of naive realism. It might be supposed that in the religious realm naive realism would be represented exclusively by primitive "idolatry" and kindred pre-scientific, animistic varieties of religious thought and life. But there is a form of religious thought and experience which still persists and is to be found sometimes in the most cultured circles, and which yet in its epistemological aspect may be considered as naive realism in religion. I refer to the characteristic philosophy and practice of religious mysticism.

That religious mysticism in its characteristic form is religious realism (epistemological realism in religion) does not admit of doubt. The religious Object, God or the Absolute, is regarded as a reality, existing independently of all subjective human experience and realization of His power and presence. Furthermore, the mystical form of religious realism is religious empiricism. It is through a special variety of religious experience that revelatory contact is made with God, it is claimed, and truth learned about him. In other words, as the ordinary, non-philosophical "plain man," or naive realist, claiming immediate perceptual experience and consequent knowledge of physical things, is classifiable as an epistemological monist, so the typical mystic, claiming such an immediate experiential acquaintance with Deity as may be taken, in his opinion, as divine revelation in his own intimate experience, may be classed as an epistemological monist, or monistic realist, in the religious realm. Finally, as claiming *knowledge* of God rather than mere belief or faith in him, the mystic may be said to be a gnostic, in a broad interpretation of the term, and not an agnostic. A few samples selected out of the superabundant evidence in support of this interpretation of religious mysticism as monistic realism, or realistic monism, with regard to God, or in the realm of religion, may now be offered.

There is no more characteristic doctrine of mysticism than that God is

to be looked for and eventually found in the mystic's own inner experience. Among the technical terms employed by the mystics "introversion" is used to designate "the beholding of God as immanent in the soul" (E. Herman, *The Meaning and Value of Mysticism*, Clarke, 1915, p. 114). There is marked unanimity among the mystics in laying claim to an experience which they thus interpret:

"To mount to God is to enter into one's self" (Albertus Magnus).

"God is nearer to me than I am to myself." "Where the soul is, there is God." "I have a capacity in my soul for taking in God entirely." "When I saw into myself, I saw God in me." "Ye men, why do ye look without for that which is within you?" (Meister Eckhart).

"The soul finds God in its own depths" (Ruysbroeck).

"We should seek God in our own interior" (St. Teresa).

"God is hidden within the soul, and the true contemplative will seek him there in love" (St. John of the Cross).

"The main point of mystic theology is to speak with and hearken to God in the recesses of the heart" (St. Francis de Sales).

"Every man has an open gate to God in his soul." "Begin to search and dig in thy own field for this pearl of eternity that lieth hidden in it. . . . Heaven is . . . a treasure hidden in the center of our own souls" (William Law).

Madame Guyon quotes her confessor to whom she went with her difficulties about prayer, as replying, "You seek without what you have within. Accustom yourself to see God in your heart, and you will find him there." "These words," she tells us, "were like a dart which penetrated my heart. They brought into my heart what I had been seeking so many years; or rather they discovered to me what was there, and which I had not enjoyed for want of knowing it! O my God, Thou wast in my heart, and demanded only a simple turning of my mind inward, to make me perceive Thy presence."

The mystics claim that this experience of Divine Reality in the inner depths of the soul is not mediated by representative ideas, but is direct and immediate. They are thus in the religious realm what the so-called "new realists" of a generation ago were in the realm of sense-experience, epistemological monists as well as realists. According to Ruysbroeck, "the divine union is effected without medium"; the mystics "enjoy God without intermediary." He continues, "The reason of the soul is like the eye of the bat," but in the mystic state "the soul is like the eagle, gazing with unmoved pupil on the rays of the sun; for so does the simple eye of the loving

spirit receive, without medium and above reason, the irradiation of the divine glory." St. Francis de Sales agrees that in the experience of God intellectual representation is transcended, "for who wants to represent that which the soul actually enjoys?"

On the basis of this immediate experience, claim is made to religious knowledge, knowledge of God. Any other supposed source of such knowledge is correspondingly disparaged. The mystics are very emphatic about this:

In "the school of the Holy Spirit" "a person can learn more in the twinkling of an eye than all the doctors can teach him" (Meister Eckhart).

"If ye keep watch over your hearts and listen for the voice of God, and learn of Him, in one short hour ye can learn more from Him than ye could learn from man in a thousand years" (John Tauler).

"The soul is made to know in an instant, by means of a new light above itself, all that God desires it to know" (St. Catherine of Genoa).

"God gives the soul an ever-increasing perceptive light, by which the understanding continues to penetrate deeper and deeper in the knowledge of its divine attraction" (Francis de Sales).

"The soul doth swim in knowledge" (Angela of Foligno).

"The book of God's image was given to me to read, and therein have I studied. I have no need of any other book." "The Gate was opened unto me, so that in one quarter of an hour I saw and knew more than if I had been many years together at a University." "I saw and knew the Being of all beings" (Jacob Boehme).

On the basis, then, of the mystical experience taken as revelation of reality, the claim is made that the central object of religious interest, commonly called God, is known to exist. This knowledge is proclaimed as immediate and, for one who has had the experience, indubitable. God, for the mystic, is actual, religiously accessible, and, presumably, religiously adequate. Indeed "adequate" would seem altogether too mild and colorless a term to express what is so deeply, if at the same time but vaguely, felt. Such emotional terms as "infinite" and "ineffable" are more suitable for voicing the mystical conviction and feeling.

It is an interesting fact that whereas some critical philosophers claim to be able to say *what* God would be, but confess themselves unable to say *that* he is, the mystic is very sure *that* God is, but is very insistent that

he cannot express in intelligible terms just *what* he is. One is tempted to ask just what it can mean to say that a being exists if no conception can be formed as to what the being is. On the other hand it may seem that the mystic is only struggling with an especially acute instance of the common difficulty of putting first-hand experience of reality into definite, communicable concepts. Convinced after many trials that he cannot express at all adequately what he has experienced of Divine Reality, he concludes, whether justifiably or not, that this is because the Divine Reality itself is by nature ineffable. At this point again there is practical unanimity among the outstanding mystics. The following excerpts from the literature of mysticism are typical.

"He who knows the Tao does not care to speak about it; he who is ever ready to speak about it does not know it." "The great everlasting infinite First Cause can neither be defined nor named." "Something exists which is incomprehensible, which is perfect, and which existed before heaven and earth were. . . . Its name I know not, but I call it Tao. Were I to give it yet another name, I should call it the Great" (Lao-Tze).

"I knew a man . . . that was caught up into paradise and heard unspeakable words, which it is not possible for a man to utter" (St. Paul).

"The One is an Absolute transcending all thought and is even beyond Being." "If anyone, seeing God, knows what he sees, it is by no means God that he so sees, but something created and knowable" (Plotinus).

"I awoke in Thee and saw Thee infinite." "God is best adored in silence; best known by nescience, best described by negatives" (St. Augustine).

"God is known through not knowing during union above mind." "By understanding nothing, understand after a manner above all intelligence." "We pray to enter into the superbright gloom, and through not seeing and not knowing to see and to know that not to see nor to know is itself the above-sight and above-knowledge. For this is veritably to see and to know and to celebrate superessentially the superessential." "Never is it true to say that we know God." "The superessential Trinity and Over-God . . . is neither an object of intellectual nor of sensible perception, nor is he absolutely anything of things existing. . . . He is all in all and nothing in none." "He is neither soul, nor intellect, . . . nor is he spirit, as we know spirit." "He can neither be affirmed nor denied." "God is far above all predicates," "No monad nor triad can express the all-transcending

hiddenness of the all-transcending superessential superexisting super-Deity" (Dionysius).

"To know God is to know Him as unknowable" (Eckhart).

"The simple eye beholds, in the divine light with simple gaze and look, whatever God is. The intellectual eye follows the gaze, desiring to explore and have experience in the same light; but at the sight of God, reason, with all that is distinct, succumbs and fails. It sees something, but what? It cannot tell; for the faculty of understanding is lifted up in a kind of knowledge without mode or form of any kind. What it beholds it cannot come up to or apprehend." But "where the intellect stops short, love advances and goes in" (Ruysbroeck).

"Thou askest me, 'How shall I think on Himself, and what is He?' and to this I cannot answer thee but this, 'I wot not.' For thou hast brought me with thy question into that same darkness and into that same cloud of unknowing that I would thou wert in thyself. . . . Of God Himself can no man think. He may well be loved, but not thought. By love He may be gotten and holden; but by thought never" (*The Cloud of Unknowing*).

"What [the mystical state] is and how it comes to pass is easier to experience than to describe. All that I have said of it is as poor and unlike it as a point of a needle is to the heavens above us." "The being of God is unfathomable." "The Divine Darkness is dark from its surpassing brightness, . . . as the shining of the sun is as darkness to weak eyes." "Man experiences something in himself, but he cannot describe it; it is above all words; he cannot give it in images and forms" (John Tauler).

"All that we can say is as nothing in comparison with that which it really is." "After learning the secrets of God I can speak some few words with certainty; yet are my words outside of those divine and ineffable workings, and in no way do they approach nigh unto them, but rather do they spoil and blaspheme" (Angela of Foligno).

"To explain in our defective language what I saw would seem to me like blaspheming the Lord or dishonoring him by my speech; so great is the distance between what the intellect, when rapt and illumined and strengthened by God apprehends and what can be expressed with words, that they seem almost contradictory" (St. Catherine of Siena).

"All that can be said of God is not God." "So long as a person can still talk of things divine, he has not yet come to port" (St. Catherine of Genoa).

"To God as Godhead appertains neither will nor knowledge

nor manifestation, nor anything that we can measure, or say, or conceive" (*Theologia Germanica*).

"God wills the understanding to understand that it understands nothing of that which His Majesty places before it." "The understanding makes no reflection, but is occupied with the fruition of God. . . . It is understood that the fruition is a certain good containing in itself all good together at once; but this good is not comprehended." "O wonderful secrets of God! I should never be satisfied with endeavoring to make them understand, if I thought I should succeed, and thus I will say a thousand foolish things, provided I may happen but once to speak to the point" (St. Teresa).

"All that the understanding may comprehend, all that the will may be satisfied with, all that the imagination may conceive, is most unlike God and most disproportionate to him" (St. John of the Cross).

"That which you have seen in my writings is but a glimpse of the mysteries, for a person cannot write them" (Boehme).

"Remember that it is always good to speak like one that knows not, and not like one who knows" (Molinos).

"O God, what shall I say thou art, when thou canst not be named? What shall I speak of thee, when speaking of thee I speak nothing but contradiction?" (Jacob Bottomley, 1650, quoted by R. M. Jones, in Hastings' *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, Vol. X, p. 579a).

"Oh, if I could express what I conceive of this state! But I can only stammer about it." "The soul knows God only, of whom it can say nothing" (Madame Guyon).

"It is not possible for me to describe all the things which I have seen in visions of the spiritual world, because the language and illustrations of this world are inadequate to express these spiritual realities; and the very attempt to reduce to ordinary language the glory of the things seen is likely to result in misunderstanding" (Sadhu Sundar Singh).

"My eyes were opened, and for the first time in all my life I caught a glimpse of the ecstatic beauty of reality. . . . It was not an experience for words. It was an emotion, a rapture of the heart. . . . I knew that every man, woman, bird and tree, and every living thing before me was extravagantly beautiful and extravagantly important. . . . Yet what the importance was, I did not grasp. If my heart could have seen just a little further, I should have understood" (M. P. Montague, "Twenty Minutes of Reality," *Atlantic Monthly*, May, 1916).



"To describe God as this or that is blasphemy." "I am dealing here with a reality which is experienced, not with metaphysical speculations or blasphemous definitions of God." "Every human conception of God is a crime *lèse majesté*. . . . God is *not* or God is *all*—the one, as the other, is proof of the helplessness of human powers of expression" (J. Anker Larsen, *With the Door Open*, 1931, pp. 102-103).

For the present it may suffice to point out that the naturalness of the suggestion is no proof of the doctrine that the ineffableness of the mystical experience reflects a similar ineffableness in the religious object, and to remark that negative experience is commonly not so good evidence of what a reality is not, as positive experience is evidence of what it is.

The mystic state, claiming as it does to be a vision or perception of God, is inevitably one of intense concentration of attention, at first more or less voluntary, either upon God himself or it may be at first upon something else from which it is later transferred to the religious Object. This passes over into an involuntary rapt contemplation, and finally, in extreme instances, into an ecstatic seizure often culminating in an apparently unconscious trance. Now concentration of attention upon one object involves a corresponding withdrawal of attention from other objects, and rapt contemplation of God will naturally lead to inattention to and temporary unconsciousness of the environing world of events and things. The intensified mystical concentration of consciousness upon God and the consequent unconsciousness, during the mystical state, of all that is not God, naturally tend to be taken as revelation not only of the reality of God but of the unreality of all that is not God. For instance, the world of material objects in space and of events in time or time-space comes to be regarded as but deceptive appearance, as compared with the one eternal and unchangeable reality, God. First with regard to the material and spatial:

"By persistent commerce with mystic visions, leave behind sensible perception" (Dionysius).

"Matter has no real being" (Scotus Erigena).

"All creatures are absolutely nothing. I do not say that they are small or anything else, but that they are absolutely nothing" (J. Tauler).

"The soul is fast asleep as to worldly things and is like one dead to the world" (St. Teresa).

"There is one loftiest point of the soul which knows nothing of body." "No form was ever seen at the summit of the soul" (Eckhart).

"The soul to find God must go out from all things, and all

things must be to it as if they existed not." "This draught of God's most deep wisdom makes the soul forget all the things of this world" (St. John of the Cross).

"The outward senses are locked up by holy abstraction; all things are as nothing" (Boehme).

"Thou sleepest and what thou seest are dream pictures" (A Persian mystic, quoted by Lehmann, *Mysticism in Heathendom and Christendom*, p. 66).

"The great soul . . . throws off *Maya* and takes up God only." "In divine love one entirely forgets the external world, even one's own body. . . . In ecstasy the whole mind remains absolutely fixed upon the supreme. . . . He whose heart earnestly longs after the Deity has no time for anything else" (Ramakrishna).

"Everything is here. . . . I sat in my garden, but there was no place in the world where I was not. . . . When one has met the eternal Now, it is East everywhere and Mecca is the very spot on which one stands" (J. Anker Larsen, *op. cit.*, pp. 52, 73, 102).

Similarly, on the basis of the psychological fact that in the state of absorbed contemplation of the religious Object the tendency is to take no note of the passing of time, so that the time thus spent comes to seem very short, or even as if it were not of any duration at all, the mystic commonly claims either to have transcended the temporal process or to have seen into the unreality of time.

"All the past and present vanish like a dream" (Amelios).

"All things in the noumenal world co-exist in an eternal now" (Plotinus).

"Time and place hinder attaining to knowledge of God. God can only be known outside time and place, since He is above them. If the soul is to see God it must look at nothing in time. While occupied with time and place, it cannot recognize God. . . . The Divine Light lifts the soul above the turmoil of temporal things." "There is one loftiest part of the soul which stands above time and knows nothing of time or of body." "When we rise past our own mind to the summit of mind [we have] an inkling of the perfection and stability of eternity, for there is neither time nor space, neither before nor after, but everything present in one new fresh-springing *now*, where millenniums last no longer than the twinkling of an eye." "God is truth, but things in time are not truth" (Eckhart).

"All is present. God contemplates himself in an eternal *now*, without before or after" (Ruysbroeck).

"The soul neither sees, nor heeds, nor understands, nor per-

ceives, all the time she is in this state, and this time is short; and indeed it seems shorter than it is. It is extremely difficult to know how long, because the senses are all in suspense" (St. Teresa).

"When I am in this state I do remember naught else" (Angela of Foligno).

"The soul has two eyes; the right eye beholds eternity, and the left eye, time. Both cannot perform their work at once. If the soul would see into eternity the left eye must be closed" (*Theologia Germanica*).

"There is no past nor future; everything is now. . . . There is no beginning and no end. . . . Eternity is now and accessible now" (J. Anker Larsen, *op. cit.*, pp. 53, 73, 94).

It may be pointed out in passing that if time be wholly unreal, there is no now at all, much less an everlasting now. The timeless validity of abstract truth and ideal value may be admitted, without committing oneself to the confused and self-contradictory concept of timeless existence. We can think of existence at all times, but we cannot think without contradiction of a real being which never has existed in the past, does not exist in the present, and will never exist in the future. If, *per impossibile*, there chanced to be something corresponding to such a figment of confused thinking, it would be not only ineffable and unknowable, but inconceivable.

Another phase of the mystical experience resulting from the extreme concentration of attention upon the religious Object is a temporary lapse of self-consciousness. Not the self, but only God is consciously contemplated, and when in retrospect the intense awareness of God is taken as revelation of the reality of God, recollection that there was no consciousness of the self tends similarly to be taken as revelation of the *unreality* of the separate finite self as such, either during the interval of the rapt mystical contemplation or more permanently. If one may speak of degrees within the extreme, the former interpretation may be said to be the less extreme, the latter the more extreme, holding as it does to the sole reality of God, man being real only as identified with or included in God. In the following excerpts from mystical writings one can detect on the one hand the description of the psychological state in which the mystic's distinct self-consciousness lapses, and on the other hand both the less extreme doctrine of temporary loss of individuality through the absorption of the self in the Absolute, or God, and the more extreme doctrine of the unreality of the finite self as distinct from the Absolute Self, or God. But attention may also be called to the fact that there is a tendency, particularly among mystics who belong in the Christian tradition, to correct or modify the doctrine of the unreality or temporary loss of individual selfhood.

This, presumably, is in recognition of moral obligation and individual responsibility. Passages making such corrections will be italicized.

The mystic "belongs to God and is one with him, like two concentric circles." "He will be that which he sees, if indeed it is possible any longer to distinguish seer and seen." "Since in the vision there were not two things, but seer and seen were one, if a man could preserve the memory of what he was when he was mingled with the Divine, he would have in himself an image of God. For he was then one with God. . . . Caught up in an ecstasy, tranquil and alone with God, . . . he turned not even to himself" (Plotinus).

"By persistent commerce with mystic visions [one is] raised aloft unknowingly to union with Him" (Dionysius).

"God's center is everywhere, and his circumference nowhere." "Through ecstasy of contemplation blessed Francis [of Assisi] passed over into God" (St. Bonaventura).

"The eye with which I see is the same eye with which he sees me." "If thy soul is to know God, it must forget itself and lose itself, for as long as it contemplates itself it cannot contemplate God." "Man is turned into God." "The soul may arrive at such an intimate union that God at last draws it to Himself altogether, so that there is no distinction left, in the soul's consciousness, between itself and God—*though God still regards it as a creature* (Eckhart).

"We can only behold that which we are." "The contemplative who has renounced himself is no longer conscious of himself except as an immense conflagration sensible of its own heat. But there comes a moment in the conflagration when simplicity throws a veil over the abyss [between man and God], and the spirit sees nothing more; nothing but pure unity." "Lost in the bliss of our eternal blending, we perceive no distinction between ourselves and God." "Even if the divine union be effected without medium, we must understand that *God and the creatures can never be confounded; union can never become confusion; the distinction remains forever inviolable.*" "By virtue of love we are plunged and absorbed in His bliss; we lose ourselves in it, *not as to our substance*, but as to the feeling of joy. In speaking of union between God and man, I have said and wish to repeat that *there is no question of unity of nature or of essence*, but unity of love. *God does not become the creature*" (Ruysbroeck).

"When man cometh into true poverty, he must transfer himself with One into One, without any distinction." "When the

Divine Sun ariseth in the soul, all other lights change into the Divine Light." "Whoever attaineth to a true contemplative life, him God draweth to Himself." "The spirit is placed in an equality and entereth into God and is embraced by God; the spirit loseth its name, so that it is called rather God than spirit—not that it is God, but only divine" (Tauler).

The mystic may "divest himself of himself, pass into God, and become wholly one with Him, as a drop of water mingles with a cask of wine" (Suso).

"I saw no difference between God and our substance, but as it were all God; and yet mine understanding took it that our substance is in God; that is to say, *God is God, and our substance is a creature in God*" (Julian of Norwich).

"The soul is so entirely made one with God and God with it, that it knoweth and enjoyeth with God the most high things" (Angela of Foligno).

"My Me is God, nor do I recognize any other Me, except God Himself. My Being is God, not by simple participation but by a true transformation of my Being." "I will have nothing to do with a love that would be *for* God or *in* God; this is a love which pure love cannot bear, since pure love is God Himself. I cannot abide to see that word *for* and that word *in*, since they denote to my mind a something that stands between God and myself" (St. Catherine of Genoa).

"God can be known only by God." "He who shall or will love God, loveth . . . One in All as All in One" (*Theologia Germanica*).

"I am as great as God, He is as small as I am; He is not above me, nor I below Him" (Angelus Silesius).

The understanding "makes no reflections, but is occupied with the fruition of God." In "the prayer of union," "the soul is thoroughly awake to God, though fast asleep as to ourselves." In "real union," "the soul neither understands nor knows anything, for all the faculties are lost and absorbed" (St. Teresa).

In "the perfect union of love," "the soul becomes divine, and, by participation, God, *so far as it is possible in this life*." In this "deification" "the soul is detached not only from all outward things, but even from itself. It passes out of itself into the Beloved." "The soul loves God with the will and strength of God Himself" (St. John of the Cross).

"The very climax of loving ecstasy is to merge the will, not in one's own content, but in that of God." "The soul flows forth and loses itself, not merely by union with the Beloved, but by

being utterly mingled with and merged in Him. . . . It is carried wholly beyond its natural limits; it is swallowed up and absorbed in God." "There is an ever increasing union of soul with God" (St. Francis de Sales).

"God heareth and seeth through thee, being now the organ of His Spirit" (Boehme).

"When the soul is in God, her progress is infinite, seeing it is that of God Himself. Having become one with God, it can see nothing but God; having lost all separateness, self-possession and distinction, the soul no longer exists; it no longer acts, but God acts, and it is the instrument" (Madame Guyon).

"I am God. I am He whom I love, and He whom I love is I. . . . If thou seest me, thou seest Him; and if thou seest Him, thou seest us both" (Husayn ibn Mansur).

"Myself with mine own eye I saw most clearly, but when I looked with God's eye, only God I saw" (Baba Kahi).

"There is no such thing as I. As by continually peeling off the skin of the onion, so by analyzing the ego it will be found that there is not any real entity corresponding to the ego. The ultimate result of all such analysis is God." "All men are divided into three classes: those who, like stone in water, are so worldly that they will not absorb the least drop of true knowledge; those who, like cloth in water, are true lovers of Bhakta and become full of Divine bliss and knowledge; and finally, those who, like salt in water, merge themselves in the Absolute and all-pervading Self, and become one with it" (Ramakrishna).

"I have met God, seen God. To say *meet* or *see* is still too superficial and external to exhaust the consciousness of the moment. It was a confluence, a union of me with God; at that moment I myself became almost melted away with the reality of God. I became God" (R. Tsunashima, as quoted by M. Anesaki, *The Religious and Social Problems of the Orient*, Macmillan, 1923, p. 19).

Rapt mystical contemplation of the Divine Being is naturally accompanied by a "serene and blessed mood," amounting at times, in the case of some mystics, to ecstatic joy. Evil and ugliness do not come within the range of mystical contemplation; to the mystic, for the time being at least, they are as if they were not. And so it comes as a natural suggestion, especially when what is consciously experienced in the mystic state is taken as revelation, that God, the sole object of consciousness in the mystical revelation, is the sole reality, and that since God is all and God is absolutely good, all is good, there is no evil. What seems such is but an illusory appearance which reality takes on in deluded mortal mind.

And so, psychology is made to teach ontology; the doctrine of the unreality of evil is based upon the bliss of ecstatic mysticism. Here again the evidence from the writings of the mystics is forthcoming and abundant.

"Evil is nohow, nowhere, no thing. God sees evil as good" (Dionysius).

"Evil is merely a negation and lies entirely outside the knowledge of God, who only knows and wills the good. . . . For God evil is not. It has meaning only in the sphere of time" (Scotus Erigena).

"If a man really abides in God's will, even the pains of hell would be a joy to him." "If I say God is good, it is not true; for what is good can grow better; what can grow better can grow best. Now these three things (good, better, best) are far from God, for he is above all" (Eckhart).

"The soul doth feel the presence of God with such love and divine fire that it loseth all love for itself and for the body. . . . God doth implant most sweet love in the soul. . . . It experienceth within itself the fulness of the goodness of God." "The soul doth swim in joyfulness and in knowledge." "I felt a sweetness so peaceful, quiet and great that I know not how to describe it." "I beheld a thing as fixed and stable as it was indescribable, and more than this I cannot say, save that it was all good." "Since God hath left me I am remained as contented as an angel; for I love toads and serpents, and even fools and demons, and nothing that I see them do, even sins committed against others, can displease me, inasmuch as I believe that God doth justly permit and desire that it should be done" (Angela of Foligno).

"All shall be well, and all manner of things shall be well." "I saw no sin" (Julian of Norwich).

"If a man truly loves God and has no will but to do God's will, the whole force of the River Rhine may run at him and will not disturb him nor break his peace" (J. Tauler).

"I stood so occupied in seeing the work of Love, that if it had thrown me soul and body into hell, hell itself would have appeared to me to be nothing but love and consolation." "If of that which this heart of mine is feeling one drop were to fall into hell, hell itself would become all life eternal." "O my God, all mine, everything is mine, because all that belongs to God seems all to belong to me" (St. Catherine of Genoa).

There is an "inward peace which can break through all the assaults and crosses of oppression, suffering, misery and humiliation," possessing which "the apostles and martyrs suffered will-

ingly all that was done to them." "All that is is good, in so far as it hath Being. The devil is good in so far as he hath Being. In this sense nothing is evil, or not good" (*Theologia Germanica*).

"Fruition is a certain good, containing in itself all good together at once" (St. Teresa).

"The soul feels itself filled with all good, emptied and delivered from all evil" (St. John of the Cross).

"I lay still in secret fruition of a joy unspeakable, . . . I had an inexpressible satisfaction and joy in suffering." "The soul drawn out of itself experiences an inward ecstasy. O unutterable happiness! Here all is God to the soul. . . . I believe that if such a soul were taken to hell, it would suffer all the cruel tortures of its fall in a complete contentment." "The soul sees only God everywhere, and all is God" (Madame Guyon).

"To the man of God right and wrong are alike." (Jalaluddin Rumi).

"Happiness is one of the marks of the Cosmic Sense." "There is no sense of sin in cosmic consciousness" (R. M. Burke).

"I saw no new thing but I saw all the usual things in a new miraculous light—in what I believe is their true light. I saw for the first time how wildly beautiful and joyous, beyond any words of mine to describe, is the whole of life. . . . For those fleeting lovely moments I did indeed and in truth love my neighbor as myself." "Heaven, in all its springtide and beauty, is here and now, before our very eyes, surging up to our very feet, lapping against our hearts; but we, alas, know not how to let it in" (M. P. Montague).

"I have now come to a stage of realization in which I see that God is walking in every human form and manifesting Himself alike through the sage and the sinner, the virtuous and the vicious. . . . Therefore when I meet different people I say to myself, 'God in the form of the saint, God in the form of the sinner, God in the form of the righteous, God in the form of the unrighteous.' He who has attained to such realization goes beyond good and evil, above virtue and vice, and realizes that the divine will is working everywhere." "Says God, 'I am the snake that biteth and the charmer that healeth; I am the judge that condemneth and the executioner that whippeth.' God tells the thief to go and steal, and at the same time warns the householder against the thief." "Everything that exists is God" (Rama-krishna).

"I say there is in fact no evil. . . . Clear and sweet is my soul, and clear and sweet is all that is not my soul" (Walt Whitman).



### Chapter III

#### CRITICAL EVALUATION OF RELIGIOUS MYSTICISM

---

The mystical experience, especially when developed to its climax in the ecstatic trance, interpreted as union with God, the sole reality, in whom is no evil, naturally and logically tends, unless strongly counteracted, to an amoralistic view and to the attitude known as "quietism." This prominent tendency is particularly prominent in certain non-Christian mystics, where it is not counteracted by the persisting influence of the strongly activistic and ethical teachings of Christianity. For instance, according to Lao-Tze, just as "God is eternally at rest, while yet there is nothing which he does not do," so "he who devotes himself to the Tao seeks from day to day to diminish his doing, till finally he arrives at doing nothing on purpose." Ramakrishna is very emphatic and uninhibited by conscientious considerations:

"You talk glibly of doing good to the world. Who are you to do good to the world? First practice devotional exercises and realize God. Attain to Him. . . . Say to Him, 'Lord, grant that my work in the world and for the world may grow less day by day, for I see that my work growing manifold only makes me lose sight of Thee. . . . All good works are for the realization of God. Works are the means and God-vision the end. . . . You talk against child-marriage and the caste system, about female emancipation and female education. I say one thing is needful—the realization of God and devotion to Him. First realize God and all things shall be added unto you.'" "Man in his state of ignorance performs all sorts of worldly works, but no sooner does he see the Almighty than he finds no longer any relish in them." "He whose heart earnestly longs after the Deity has no time for anything else."

And Richard Jeffries, in the period of his nature-mysticism, before he was converted to Catholicism, wrote, "Lives spent in doing good have been lives nobly wasted. Everything is in vain" (*The Story of My Heart*, p. 122; cf. pp. 69, 70, 92, 95).

The great Christian mystics have commonly seen the danger in this natural tendency of mystical contemplation toward an amoralistic quietism, and have sought to guard against it. In other words, while influenced in an opposite direction, both psychologically and logically, by their mystical habits, experiences and ideas, they not uncommonly come out of their mystical states with the same Christian practical and ethical principles and attitudes with which they sought to enter into them. Thus Eckhart affirms that "it is better to feed the hungry than to spend one's time in contemplation." Ruysbroeck agrees that while the true mystic does really dwell in God, "yet he goes out toward created things in a spirit of love, in the virtues and in works of righteousness." No one could be more definite about this than this great mystic. "Interior consolation is of an inferior order," he insists, "to the act of love which renders service to the poor. Were you rapt in ecstasy like St. Peter or St. Paul, or whomsoever you will, and heard that some poor person was in want of a hot drink, or other assistance, I should advise you to awake for a moment from your ecstasy to go and prepare the food. Leave God for God; find Him, serve Him in His members; you will lose nothing by the exchange." The quietistic repose is "simply laziness," he charges. "This tranquility is forgetfulness of God, one's self and one's neighbor. It is the exact opposite of divine peace." Tauler recommends a balanced alternation between worship and work. When one becomes conscious of the Lord's presence, he concedes, one ought to let work alone and worship Him; but when one is left to one's self, his advice is to begin again and work diligently. Of "the kiss of divine love" he hesitates not to declare, "I do not want to have it, for the joy of it would flood my heart so that I should lose consciousness, and then I could no longer serve Thee!" St. Teresa is fairly typical of many devotedly ethical Christian mystics (and her own life was a good illustration of her words) in her assertion, "It is to this point that orison leads, the incessant production of work, work!" Accentuated certitude of God's real existence encourages the Christian mystic in the life to which he is already dedicated, of faithfully doing what he believes to be the will of the perfectly moral God.

Still, in certain even of the Christian mystics, the quietistic tendency of mystic contemplation has broken through the restraining barriers of the traditional emphasis on activity and duty. Even St. Catherine of Genoa felt keenly for a while the difficulty she expresses in the question, "Thou commandest me to love my neighbor, and yet I cannot love anything but Thee, nor can I admit anything else and mix it up with Thee; how then shall I act?" She found the solution of her problem in the thought that he who loves God loves all that God loves. The Spanish mystic, Molinos, however, remained fundamentally quietistic. "There is no need for the soul to take any pains or trouble," in his opinion; when God lays the

soul to sleep, "He possesses it and fills it and works in it powerfully and sweetly, without any knowledge or understanding of its own." And Madame Guyon, while not failing to criticize certain mothers who, "because they experience a certain sweetness in prayer, would be all day long at church, while their children are running to destruction," and while at times not unconscious of a similar danger in her own life, confesses nevertheless that she let herself "be consumed by love all the day long" and even "passed whole days without being able to pronounce one word." This she interprets as due to the Lord's possession of her soul becoming stronger with every passing day.

It is probably an over-appreciation of the life of quiet mystical contemplation, as being almost exclusively the life lived with God and in His presence, which leads to the quietism of extreme mysticism; and it is also probably, as has been hinted above, an over-appreciation of the revelation-value of the content of the rapt consciousness of the mystic which accounts for the characteristic mystical doctrine of the unreality of space, time, matter and the finite self, or, in other words, of the *sole* reality of God. As Rudolf Otto suggested, in contrast with naturalistic pantheism, which would say that all reality, man as well as the infra-human world, is, taken as a whole, God, the mystical doctrine may well be called *theopantism*, the view that in the last analysis—or revelation, rather—man's self and the finite world are equally illusory and unreal, leaving God as the sole reality.

Now the mystical consciousness, formed as it is under the molding influence of strong emotion, is characterized by an unusually high degree of certitude, or subjective assurance. There is a great practical advantage in this, in so far as that of which the mystic is subjectively assured happens to be objectively true. It fortifies the soul for steadfast endurance and persevering action, to be firmly convinced of the reality of a God whose will is identical with any morally idealistic action which one is proposing to undertake. But if and in so far as the mystic may chance to be mistaken in that of which he is so sure subjectively, his very assurance becomes a disadvantage to himself and others, giving rise as it does to a dogmatism as immune to corrective argument as it is, many times, dangerously misleading.

Many mystics and sympathizers with mysticism know, to be sure, how to make use of reasoning, not for the correction of their subjective certitudes, but for their defensive "rationalization." Rationalizing argumentation in support of what one feels assured of, on grounds of either tradition or feeling, is commonly very far from amounting to logical demonstration. For demonstration, what is needed is unambiguous verification in experience, or strict deduction from what is thus experimentally verified.

And it may well be doubted whether either the crude reasonings of a Mrs. Eddy or the more astute procedure and subtle arguments of the philosophical absolute idealist can serve to transform the characteristic subjective certitudes of the extreme mystic into either demonstrated knowledge or truly reasonable belief. The best that can be said for Christian Science, philosophically and as a theoretical system, is that it is at once a popular understanding—or misunderstanding—of absolute idealism and a sort of inverted extreme mysticism, endeavoring to arrive piecemeal and especially in the field of pain and evil at an experience or “demonstration” of the sole reality of God and the consequent unreality of all else. This alleged “demonstration” is an effect of suggestion, an experiential result obtained, in the instances in which it does occur, by means of a determined affirmation of what is characteristically mystical *doctrine*, whereas the true mystical procedure is to begin with a psychological *experience* which naturally and of itself suggests the typical mystical doctrines.

But in the last analysis little more can be said for the logic of the sophisticated philosopher who claims to find not only a rational explication and proof of the truth of the mystical experience in absolute idealism but at the same time an adequate empirical verification of absolute idealism in the characteristic mystical experience. Neither absolute idealism nor the dogmas of the mystic, we would claim, can be set forth as separately demonstrated, and so neither can be shown to be true from the mere fact of its agreement with the other. So far as anything that has been logically demonstrated is concerned, all that can be said is that each is either unproved or disproved apart from the other, so that it may even be claimed that each is seriously discredited by its agreement with the other. It may well be that no metaphysical system can, as a whole, receive full logical demonstration, that the most that can be done for the best of such systems is to show that in the light of established facts, adequately criticized values, and all pertinent logical considerations, it is a reasonably tenable system of faith. But even admitting as much, both rationalized extreme mysticism and absolute idealism appealing to mysticism for empirical verification remain as they were, the one highly suspect and the other unproved or even self-refuting.\* And it would be for the mystic but a poor compensation for the failure of his attempt at rationalization, if he were offered the solace of an irrationalism according to which peace of mind is to be gained at the cost of the crucifixion of both reason and common sense.

It is not uncommon, however, for mystics to go almost that far. While there is a natural tendency to rationalize the substance of the mystical

\* Cf. *The Pilgrimage of Faith*, Ch. VI; *The Problem of Knowledge*, Chs. VII, VIII; *Philosophical Review*, XXIII, 1914, pp. 27-47.

intuition, there is also an opposite tendency to set intuitions over against reason, either in defiant irrationalistic opposition to the latter, or in a more patronizing attitude which would admit the relative validity of reason's attempts to solve the riddle of existence, but which insists on the greatly superior insight realized in the immediate super-rational revelation of reality and truth enjoyed in mystical intuition. As we have seen, the mystic claims that in the immediacy of his experience he has a direct perception of God, or Divine Reality. If he is right in this he is simply following approved empirical method in appealing to immediate perception for the verification or correction of mere reasoning and otherwise unaided thought. But just this is the crucial question for the epistemology of mysticism. Is the mystical intuition valid perception of independently existing Divine Reality?

Intuition, or immediate awareness, may, as we have seen, be taken broadly as covering four principal varieties. Rational intuition is immediate awareness of axioms and simple instances of logical necessity. Immediate awareness of intrinsic value may be called appreciative intuition. Immediate awareness of reality actually present within the field of conscious experience is perception, or perceptual intuition. The term is not necessarily confined to sense-perception of the physical, but may be used to cover psychical processes such as remembering and wishing, and even, it may be claimed, consciousness of the psychical subject of such processes as well. But the term intuition is also used of an immediate awareness claiming to apprehend, apart from memory or reasoning, the truth about something not perceptually present. This we may term imaginal intuition. Perceptual intuition is not infallible, being sometimes infected with illusion, or even hallucination, but imaginal intuition is especially fallible. It may prove fruitful in the suggestion of hypotheses about reality, but ultimately it must be checked up by perceptual intuition. Otherwise it has no logical status and can lead only to dogmatism.

Now the question before us is as to whether the mystic intuition of God, or Divine Reality, is of the nature of valid perception, or is no more than either imaginal intuition or hallucination or a blend of both. It is a well-recognized fact that the mystic's experience often includes an element of hallucination, frequently recognized as such by the mystic himself. The records of mystical experience abound with accounts of special visions, auditions, feelings of motion, and the like. Sometimes, at least from our point of view, the experience has been unmistakably hallucinatory, as when Plotinus saw the celestial Venus, or when the Holy Babe "appeared" to Suso and to Ignatius Loyola, hundreds of years after he had ceased to be a babe in arms. As for supposed divine "locutions," it is confessed by some of the most experienced of the mystics that they are

frequently, or even generally, misleading. Albertus Magnus warns that experiences "containing a sensuous element" are "dangerous." Richard of St. Victor lays down the rule that "visions should not be believed unless they have the authority of Scripture." Catherine of Genoa expresses the opinion that "no more is shown the soul than is necessary for leading it to perfection," while Walter Hilton, Angela of Foligno, St. John of the Cross, and others, suggest that humility and love to God and man are better signs of divine grace than anything seen or heard or otherwise sensed. "There is always ground for fear," says this same St. John, that the special sensory effects "proceed from the devil rather than from God." Similarly, St. Teresa heard many locutions which she regarded as supernatural, but could distinguish as divine or diabolical only by the presence or absence of desirable spiritual after-effects in the soul. Boehme added "the light of nature" to Scripturalness as a test of the validity and authenticity of mystical revelations. St. Francis de Sales insists that "ecstasy which is of God affects the will more than the intellect," so that it comes to be the "ecstasy of a holy, pure living." "Visions are inferior powers of the soul," according to Madame Guyon, and are not to be relied on; "distinct interior words too are subject to illusion." Swedenborg believed he was often in supernatural communication with spirits, but expresses his mature judgment as to their alleged communications thus frankly: "When the spirits begin to speak with a man, he ought to beware that he believes nothing whatever from them; for they say almost anything. Things are fabricated by them, and they lie. . . . They have a passion for inventing; and whenever any subject of conversation is presented, they think they know it and give their opinions upon it, quite as if they knew. . . . They induce a strong persuasion that it is the Lord Himself who speaks and commands, so that man cannot but believe and obey. . . . The mediate revelation which is effected by means of the Word is superior to an immediate revelation which is effected by means of spirits."

The suspicious character of all special sensory effects in connection with pronounced mystical states strongly suggests that we be very cautious even in connection with special experiential features and interpretations more commonly (or even all but uniformly) present in connection with the characteristic mystical seizures. What is particularly open to suspicion is not so much that positive certitude of the reality, accessible presence, and religious significance of the Divine Being which the mystic shares with hosts of religious people who are not at all mystical in the technical sense of the term; but rather those negative impressions and interpretations associated with the dogma and supposed revelation of the *sole* reality of God, namely the unreality of matter, space, time, the finite self, and all evil. Are the phenomena of mystical contemplation, ecstasy, and trance to be explained as the natural concomitants and effects of what is simply

religious self-hypnosis and auto-suggestion? (Cf. e.g., G. A. Coe, "The Sources of the Mystical Revelation," *Hibbert Journal*, Vol. VI, 1908, pp. 359 ff.). As we have already hinted, absorbed attention to the idea of God, or narrow concentration transferred from some insignificant object to something identified with God, may result in an experience easily interpretable afterwards as revelation of the sole reality of God and therewith of the unreality of all that is not God, whether the finite self or the spatial-temporal world of matter and evil.

This critical explanation of extreme mysticism, especially in its negative aspect, in terms of the psychology of self-hypnosis, auto-suggestion, and hallucination, finds considerable support in the records left by the mystics themselves. Julian of Norwich, who seems to have induced a state of self-hypnosis by gazing at a crucifix, says significantly, "I saw God *in a point*" (W. R. Inge, *Studies of English Mystics*, pp. 51, 55-57). Madame Guyon's Autobiography records numerous instances of her own not always voluntary lapses into a hypnotic condition. Jacob Boehme's experience is recorded as follows: "His eye fell on a burnished pewter dish which reflected the sunshine with such marvellous splendor that he fell into a deep inward ecstasy, and it seemed to him as if he could look into the principles and deepest foundations of things. He believed that it was only a fancy, and in order to banish it from his mind he went out upon the green. But here he remarked that he gazed into the very heart of things; the very herbs and grasses and that nature harmonized with what he had inwardly seen." The Hindu Yogi's practice of hypnotizing himself and inducing the mystic state by gazing at the end of his nose and repeating the syllable, "Om," is well-known. Richard Jeffries, nature-mystic, thus describes a phase of his experience: "I looked up through the elm branches to the sky. In a moment all that was behind me seemed to disappear, and to leave me alone. . . . I was absorbed; I drank the beauty of the morning; I was exalted" (*The Story of My Heart*, pp. 513 ff.). William James, in his *Varieties of Religious Experience* (p. 384), quotes this from Tennyson: "This [state of trance] has come upon me through repeating my own name to myself silently, till all at once, as it were out of the intensity of the consciousness of individuality, individuality seemed to dissolve and fade away into boundless being; and this not a confused state, but the clearest, the surest of the surest, utterly beyond words—where death was an almost laughable impossibility—the loss of personality (if so it were) seeming no extinction but the only true life."

St. John of the Cross, himself a great mystic, speaks for the judicious critics of mysticism when he says, "I am terrified by what passes among us in these days. Anyone who has barely begun to meditate, if he becomes conscious of these words during his self-recollection, pronounces them forthwith to be the work of God, and says, 'God has spoken to me,' or

'I have had an answer from God.' But it is not true: *such an one has only been speaking to himself*. Besides, the affection and desire for these words cause them to reply to themselves and then to imagine that God has spoken."

Obviously then, the mystics themselves being witnesses, there is not uncommonly an element of illusion and hallucination in the more accentuated phases of mystical experience. And it seems reasonable to interpret as thus self-deceptive not only such positive appearances as these to which we have just been giving attention (abnormal visions, auditions, etc.) and which we may call *positive* hallucinations, but also those characteristic mystical disappearances (of the spatial world, temporal process, the finite self, and all evil) with accounts or indications of which the literature of mysticism abounds. The specific experiences which underlie the seeming unreality (to the mystic) of the common world of things, events and persons we may characterize as instances of *negative* hallucination. If it be pointed out defensively that the disappearance is a normal consequence of the mystic's exclusive concentration of his attention upon God, so that the "seeming unreality" of the finite may possibly be a legitimate element in a valid mystical revelation, the critic may point out by way of rejoinder that, in general, it is not in accordance with common sense to interpret failure (because of recognized special subjective psychological conditions) to perceive what would otherwise be perceived as meaning revelation of the unreality of the things of common perceptual experience. In other words, seeing is generally a better basis for believing than not seeing is for disbelieving.

But not only is the unreality of time, space, matter, the finite self and evil not proved by their disappearance in the mystic trance; it does not seem to be too much to say that the alleged unreality is disproved by ordinary everyday practical experience. The Hindu mystics maintain that all such things as food are *maya* (deceptive appearance), and yet even Ramakrishna has to admit that "a man totally devoid of *maya* [such as food] will not survive more than twenty-one days"! Nothing can be plainer than that the illusory and hallucinatory character of some of the positive phenomena and of most or possibly all of the negative phenomena of mystical experience is practically demonstrable and has been demonstrated over and over again by mystics and non-mystics alike in their inevitable recourse to the necessities and experiences of everyday life. No excessive criticism, therefore, is involved in characterizing the epistemology of the typical mystic as an extreme (uncritical and dogmatic) monistic realism in religion. If the question be raised as to the tenability of a more critical monistic religious realism, according to which there could be valid immediate cognitive experience of an independently existing divine



reality, our reply must simply be that this is the very problem of religious knowledge with which our present discussion is centrally concerned. Whatever its difficulties, the problem must be grappled with presently.

What has been said in criticism thus far does not amount to a total discrediting of religious mysticism. There remain, within the total content of characteristic mystical doctrine, convictions held with a positive certitude which is not refuted by ordinary non-mystical experience. In the midst of much the truth of which is ambiguous at the best, the mystic holds with unwavering subjective certitude to the reality, accessibility, and sufficiency of God. These affirmations are exceedingly important, if true; and, assuming their truth and practical importance, we must grant that the mystic enjoys a very great practical advantage over his half-believing, half-doubting neighbor in just this extra measure of certitude which enables him to act with firm decision and confident perseverance where others are inclined to lag and falter. Says Richard Vaughan in a preface to his son's well-known work (*Hours with the Mystics*), "If mysticism be often a dream, it is commonly a dream in the right direction." Rather would we say, when the mystic acts in obedience to his "heavenly vision," he tends to move in the right direction, which would seem to indicate that his mysticism is not all a dream. His unrefuted positive certitude of the actuality, accessibility, and adequacy of God may have emerged as mere imaginal intuition, the flowering of psychological forces still more or less obscure; but it may be that the way is open for it to become not only a not unreasonable but a positively reasonable belief and, when given the whole-hearted devotion of his feeling-willing self, a reasonable and dynamic positive faith.

If it be asked whether such an unrefuted, highly assured, and even positively reasonable mystical faith in the reality, accessible presence, and religious sufficiency of God is not entitled to be considered religious *knowledge*, the reply must be that that is a very different question. If and in so far as the mystical experience and certitude of conviction are the result of self-hypnosis, either under the immediate influence of the God-idea or as involving an act of mental transference of concentrated attention from an insignificant physical object to one both most significant and superphysical, it would be fatuous to equate the religious intuition logically with strictly verified, scientific knowledge. This is not necessarily to forbid the use of tested mystical techniques for producing adequate certitude of the vital essentials of positive religion, but knowledge is not rightly defined in terms of subjective certitude alone, however great the degree of such certitude or even however true it may happen to be. Properly defined in minimum terms, knowledge is not only adequate

certitude but *adequately critical* (i.e., logical) certitude of the presence of what is really present and of the truth of judgments which are really true. If the mystic's unrefuted assurance of God is to be allowed to pass as knowledge it must be more than the mere auto-hypnotic idea-mysticism or transference-mysticism to which we have just now referred. It must be what we may call experience-mysticism, including within itself or following hard upon the discovery (or revelation) of a divinely functioning Factor at work in and through the life of the individual as a unit in the observable social and natural world. We are not saying positively as yet that there is any such empirical discovery and revelation of God; that remains the central concern for our coming constructive consideration. What is meant here and now is that if such discovery, or revelation, be not forthcoming, all speech of religious certitude as knowledge in any strictly logical sense of the word will be deceptive and vain. What is meant here by "experience-mysticism" as distinguished from mere "idea-mysticism" or "transference-mysticism" is mystical experience cultivated for the sake of greater subjective certitude and impressiveness (i.e., apart from distinctively mystical states) in what can already or otherwise claim to be amply verified and thus virtually known. If the mystic's assurance is knowledge at all, it is knowledge not primarily because of the mystical increment in the degree of subjective certitude, but rather by virtue of empirical verification in the world of normal inner and outer human experience. This crucial question of the possibility of religious knowledge (in the essentially scientific sense of the term knowledge) is still postponed, but it may be surmised that for purposes of knowledge, thus understood, what some writers have called "moderate mysticism" may be quite as serviceable, if not more serviceable than the apparently confused and confusing experiences and assurances, negative as well as positive, of that more extreme development of mysticism which culminates in auto-hypnotic ecstasy and trance. Furthermore, it would seem that no matter how strong and persistent the purely subjective mystical certitude may be, it is highly desirable, for cognitive as well as practical purposes, that the mystic test his mystical assurances, positive and negative, in the experiences of practical religion and practical life.

Before attempting a final epistemological evaluation of mysticism, there are two specific questions which demand attention, for the reason that upon the answers we can reasonably give to them depends in some measure the credibility not only of assurances which are primarily mystical but even of that degree of reassurance which a moderate experience-mysticism brings to ordinary practical religious experience. The first of these questions is whether there is not about mysticism something ineradicably pathological. If there is, it will not be easy to justify the view that the

mystic is at an advantage in his religious certitude, as compared with his non-mystical but conscientiously religious neighbor.

The criterion of the pathological is not easily stated in comprehensive terms. In disease and sickness, spiritual as well as physical, there is often an intuitive painful feeling of ill-being which tends to serve as a spur to some attempt at readjustment for the sake of comfort. But such intuition is not at all universally present and even when it is, it is by no means infallible. Physicians and psychiatrists are able to recognize, in certain microscopic, chemical, and psycho-analytic data, phenomena which they take to be symptomatic of disease. But for practical purposes perhaps the functional test may well be made prominent in the distinguishing of health from disease. Sickness or disease, let us say, is a condition of body or mind in which there is inability to function desirably, when due to something internal to the physical, or psycho-physical, organism itself, rather than to something only in the environment. This limitation seems necessary, if our definition is to conform at all closely to current usage, for we should not consider a person to be in a pathological condition if his inability to function desirably were due solely to undesirable environmental conditions. The test we are proposing of the pathological or normally healthy character of mysticism, then, is the functional test. Does the mystic function better or worse, by virtue of his mysticism, in the world in which he is placed?

The question, on further analysis, seems to fall apart into three questions: Is the mystic state pathological? Is the constitution of the mystic pathological? Is religion, of which religious mysticism is a special manifestation, itself essentially pathological? We shall briefly indicate answers to these questions in succession.

As for the mystic state, it would seem that there must be something definitely pathological about it when in the form of inner rapture and trance it occurs so often and so uncontrollably as to interfere seriously with the performance of clearly important practical duties. When, for instance, Madame Guyon tells us that repeatedly at very brief intervals she passed into a state of trance in spite of her struggle against it because of practical duties awaiting her attention, and that sometimes she "passed whole days without being able to pronounce one word," such mystical states have something as pathological about them as the hypnosis of the subject who is habitually unable to prevent his being hypnotized by one by whom he has frequently been hypnotized in the past. Furthermore, misleading locutions and appearances of monstrous and frightful shapes, being not only useless but positive hindrances to normal activity, seem, as judged by the functional criterion, clearly pathological.

But it would be going too far, to say that a mystical state is pathological just because, so long as it lasts, the subject cannot act precisely as he would

or should do in his ordinary non-mystical states; the same thing might be said of the person who has freely consented to let himself be hypnotized. He is not free, while under hypnosis, to act as he otherwise normally would, but the experience as a whole may be reasonably considered to be of the nature of a psychical adventure which may possibly be justified for some cognitive or practical purpose. So, too, the person who succeeds in inducing, with practical purpose or in the hope of illumination, a mystical state participating even in the character of the hypnotic trance, may be viewed as engaged in a quite healthy quest of spiritual adventure—an adventure which may conceivably be ill-advised; but neither the mystic's constitution, nor, if viewed in its proper setting, his mystic state can be fairly stigmatized as necessarily pathological. In fact, it is the person who is so lacking in power of concentration that he cannot possibly be hypnotized by himself or by another, who is, apart from other differences, the more open to the suspicion of being either physically or mentally pathological.

It is not to be denied, however, that in some instances the constitution of the mystic, or the condition he (or perhaps more frequently, she) is in at the time of the experiences in question, has been pathological. St. Teresa, whose own physical and psychical health was not always perfect, has this to say of some others who came under her observation: "Some persons, being weakened with severe penances, prayers, or watchings, or having naturally a weak constitution, swoon away on receiving some of these consolations, and their nature fails them; and when they perceive some internal delight with a certain external decay and languishing; or when a spiritual sleep, as it is called, happens, which is somewhat more than the above-mentioned, they . . . allow themselves to be absorbed; and the more they yield, the more they are absorbed, because this nature becomes weaker, and in their idea it seems to be a rapture; but I call it a stupidity, for it is nothing else but losing our time and destroying our health." Here we have a good illustration of a mystic herself applying the functional test to the phenomena of mysticism in order to distinguish the normal and healthy from the pathological.

There are two things to be said further, however, in connection with this matter of the constitution and health of the mystic. There are facts which seem to warrant the statement that very commonly the mental and physical health of the mystic, as well as his or her practical effectiveness, show decided improvement and enhancement as a result of the mystical experience. Furthermore, the fact that the nervous and mental health of the mystic is not infrequently easily deranged is not without its explanation and its compensations. As in the case of highly bred and especially fine varieties of plants and animals, special care in nurture is necessary to

avoid injury by what would not affect the ordinary wild variety, so it may well be with those who have a special natural aptitude for rewarding mystical experiences. A degree of sensitivity of nature is a precondition of any marked capacity for appreciating values and achieving valuable results in the realm of religious as well as of aesthetic experience, and this unusual sensitivity of nature inevitably carries with it a corresponding sensitiveness and liability to injury. But to the artist and to the mystic the special sensitivity with its special possibilities of experience and accomplishment may well seem worth all it costs in the way of added danger of injury through mistreatment or neglect.

A third question concerning mysticism and pathology is whether religion itself, of which mystical experience is a specially developed phase, may not be viewed as a perversion or pathological development of instinctive drives or impulses much more crudely animalistic than they themselves are. This is a subject which can be discussed to better advantage when we come to consider the particular form of psychologism in religion which has come to be associated with the theories of Sigmund Freud; but for the present a few brief remarks by way of critical rejoinder may suffice to indicate, if not fully to vindicate, our position. In the first place, development of the new on the basis of the old and to some extent out of the material it supplies is not necessarily perversion; the new is to be judged on its own merits. We who believe in evolution need constantly to remind ourselves that "a thing is what it is, not what it came from." Evolution leaves room for the emergence of novelty, and the new development may be an instance of wholly desirable sublimation. Furthermore, as Jung and Adler have maintained, and as Rivers, McDougall and others have done much to show, Freud's pansexuality theory involves gross and highly misleading exaggeration. Dr. Rivers, for instance, has convincingly shown that the phenomena of "shell-shock" were a disguised expression of fear, and not of any sexual interest or impulse. But it may be freely admitted that a great variety of "natural" impulses, either in something like their original or in a highly sublimated form, have entered into the long-drawn-out evolution of religion. The development in man of love for God, whether mystical or not, may well be supposed to have involved processes of sublimation of primitive natural affection and transference from mate or child or parent or friend to an object more ideal than any of these; but that is not necessarily to say anything against the value or validity of spiritual religion, either as practical dependence and adjustment, or as mystical contemplation and worship, or as a well-balanced alternation back and forth between the one and the other.

A further question, that has, once it has been pointed out, an obvious bearing upon the validity of the mystic's claim to experience and knowl-

edge of God in and through his mystical experience, has to do with the subconscious or "unconscious" processes of mind. Assuming the common view, that in the more marked mystical experiences there is an irruption of forces previously latent in the subconscious or unconscious life of mind, the question arises as to how, if it is simply his own "subterranean" self with which the mystic is in immediate communion, he can be right in claiming an immediate perceptual contact with God. At this point several possible courses open up before the world-be defender of mystical theology. He may suggest, with William James, that it is in the subconscious life that the immediacy of contact with God takes place. But what the typical mystic claims is more than this, namely, that he has immediate *conscious* experience of and contact with God. If, with W. E. Hocking (*The Meaning of God in Human Experience*, Yale Univ. Press, 1912, p. 527), the mystic maintains that the mystical reinforcement of the individual will is fully explained in terms of the subconscious, and that what comes from the subconscious is never more than what has been put there by previous conscious processes of the individual himself, the only possible immediate contact with the living God must have been in that past conscious religious experience, not in its after-effect in the subconscious. If, however, with Jung, it be held that the individual "unconscious mind" has been built up in the long course of racial history, and that nothing characteristic can be in the mystical consciousness which was not formerly in the subliminal or unconscious, a natural conclusion is that whatever experiential contact with God there may be or have been as basic to the experience must have been in the more or less remote racial past. But if the mystic has the "natural piety" (Cf. S. Alexander, *Space, Time and Deity*, Macmillan, 1920; and C. Lloyd Morgan, *Emergent Evolution*, Holt, 1923, p. 4) to recognize the emergence of novelty as a fact of evolution, however mysterious, there will be no consideration in favor of there having been a recognizable divine (divinely functioning) Factor in immediate creative relationship with the evolving racial mind in the past which will not apply with at least equal force to any spiritually creative mystical experience in the present. Here again, then, the question of the possible religious knowledge value of mystical experience at its best resolves itself into our problem of the possibility of any empirical religious knowledge at all.

It would seem that if the question be that of the *practical* value of mysticism, the answer must be that historically mysticism has been both harmful and helpful, both good and evil. It may be that the same double verdict should be rendered with regard to its value for religious knowledge. This will mean that religious mysticism has both a good and a bad essence. In religion, or conscious relationship to God, as in conscious

relationship to things and to people, there tends naturally to be an alternation between the practical phase or moment, in which the object is regarded and used as means, and the aesthetic or contemplative moment, in which the object is appreciated for its intrinsic value as an end in itself. In normal life there tends to be in all of these conscious relationships, a rhythm of alternation, back and forth, between the practical and the contemplative. In religion this takes the form of an alternation between dependence upon God for specific benefits and worship of God for what he is in himself (Cf. W. E. Hocking, *op. cit.*, Ch. XXVIII).

Now these two phases of experiential religion tend, as naturally as do activity and rest in general, each to prepare for and lead to the other. Successful practical adjustment to and dependence upon God as Means leads, by way of gratitude, to worship of God as End. Furthermore, the attitude of religious contemplation, may, under certain conditions, as we have seen, come to be so concentrated as to give rise to the special psychical state or states known as mystical. What we have called experience-mysticism may thus be regarded as continuous with worship, as worship is continuous with the more immediately practical phase of religious adjustment. Defining our subject-matter in terms of its good essence, then, we may say that mysticism is a special development of the contemplative aspect of religion, leading to such a high degree of certitude of the reality, accessibility, and sufficiency of God, as to make religion strongly dynamic in everyday life. On the other hand, thinking principally of what we have called idea-mysticism and transference-mysticism, we may define mysticism in terms of its bad essence, as follows: Mysticism is acute self-hypnosis under the influence, first or last, of the idea of God, leading to a strong impression of the sole reality of God, and consequently to a denial of the reality of the spatio-temporal world, of the finite self, and of all evil.

If it be asked whether as a rule we ought to define and think of mysticism in terms of its good or of its bad essence, the proper answer seems to be that all depends upon who and where "we" are. Agreeing with R. A. Vaughan's estimate of mysticism, that "its good has greatly outweighed its evil" (*Hours with the Mystics*, Preface), we may be sure that for us of the practically minded West, there is much more danger of our losing what there is of good in mysticism than of being injured by carrying it to an undesirable extreme. Among the ascetics of India it might be different; there it might be advisable to learn to think of mysticism as a danger and to define it accordingly in terms of its bad essence. It is interesting to note that some of our psychologists and philosophers who have reacted against a highly emotional type of mysticism (e.g. J. H. Leuba and G. A. Coe) define mysticism in terms of its bad essence, while others, who have reacted against both an agnostic naturalism and a rather

arid rationalistic idealism (W. E. Hocking and C. A. Bennett) define mysticism in terms of its good essence.

Finally, the upshot of our critical examination of extreme epistemological monism and realism in religion, as exemplified in the prevailing religious epistemology of the mystics, has been, I take it, a demonstration of the untenability of any such absolutely monistic realism in the field of religion as would take *all* the usual contents of extreme mystical ecstasy as valid immediate revelation, and thus an empirical demonstration of the *exclusive* reality of God.

In contrast with this dogmatic extreme in religious realism, the point of view adopted in our critical discussion may be characterized as a critical monistic realism, according to which Divine Reality is perceived indeed in religious experience at its best, but in such a way and with such an admixture of the subjective paraphernalia of apprehension or incidental accompaniments that not all that is experienced in mystical religion is to be taken as revelation of the independently existing God, while at the same time not all that is crowded out of consciousness in the mystical state is to be taken as having been shown thereby to be unreal. Whether our critical monistic realism is itself a reasonably tenable position, and not simply preferable to a more extreme and dogmatic form of monistic religious realism, we shall have to consider at some length in a later part of our discussion (Chapter XI).



## PART II

### MONISTIC IDEALISM IN RELIGION





## Chapter IV

### RELIGIOUS PSYCHOLOGISM

---

What we mean here by idealism in religion is to be sharply distinguished from what is sometimes called "religious idealism." The latter term might well be restricted in its reference, as by some recent writers, to an idealistic interpretation of the physical world (i.e. as being in essence exclusively of the nature of *idea* in some sense of the word) adopted or retained because of its supposed religious value.\* By "idealism in religion," on the other hand, as we shall use the term here, is meant epistemological idealism applied to the religious Object, that is, the view that God or the gods, Divine Reality, the distinctive object of religious interest, is no more than idea in some sense of the term. This religious application of epistemological idealism, with its identification of the religious object we seek to know with the idea which we do or at least can know (the God-idea, religious percept, content of religious intuition), is, according to our definition of the term, an epistemological monism, as well as idealism. Ideas are in their nature essentially knowable, and if idealistic epistemological monism in religion should prove tenable or especially if it should prove demonstrable, a way of escaping from religious agnosticism would seem to have been opened up.

We shall first give our attention to some representatives of the psychological variety of epistemological idealism. By psychological idealism in religion is meant the view that God, the Divine Reality, or religious object, by whatever name it may be called, is nothing more than the subjective idea of God in consciousness—or that, along with some further immediate but purely subjective content of religious experience. It is contrasted with an abstract, logical idealism, such as would regard the Divine as being nothing concretely actual, but a merely abstract universal ideal or a group of such ideals. Thus while for logical idealism the religious object is transsubjective and not immediate, for psychological idealism God, the religious object, is an element of conscious immediacy and not anything transsubjective, or really existent independently of the

\* See *The Pilgrimage of Faith*, Chs. V, VI.

religious consciousness. Its position is thus, in the original sense of a much-abused term, essentially a-theistic.

Among those who interpret the object or objects of religious consciousness after the manner of subjective, or psychological idealism, there are some who identify God with the God-idea as created by mere wishful thinking, or human desire. The classical representative of this position is Ludwig Feuerbach, whose works in this field began to appear about one hundred years ago.

Feuerbach criticizes agnostic scepticism in religion as being virtual atheism, but what he offers as a substitute is frank subjectivism, a position much more obviously atheistic than the one from which he pretends to offer a way of escape. Posing as the friend of religion, he points to scepticism as the arch-enemy of religion.

"Religion," he declares, "will not have a mere phantasm of God; it demands God himself. . . . But the distinction between object and conception, between God as he is in himself and God as he is for me, is a sceptical distinction, and therefore an irreligious one." "The theory that God cannot be defined and known is the product of modern unbelief." "On the ground that God is unknowable, man excuses himself to what is yet remaining of his religious conscience for his forgetfulness of God, his absorption in the world." "The denial of determinate positive predicates concerning the divine nature is nothing else than a denial of religion, with, however, an appearance of religion in its favor, so that it is not recognized as a denial; it is simply a subtle, disguised atheism." "This distinction between what God is in himself and what he is for me destroys the peace of religion, and is, besides, an untenable distinction. What he is to me is all that he is." "Religion has the conviction that its conceptions . . . are objectively true, representing God as he is. To every religion the gods of other religions are only notions concerning God, but its own conception of God is to it God himself, the true God—God such as he is in himself" (*The Essence of Christianity*, Eng. tr., pp. 14-17).

In a way which is reminiscent of Hegel's definition of religion as "the Divine Spirit's knowledge of itself through the mediation of finite spirit," Feuerbach, Hegel's extreme left-wing follower, holds that

"Religion is man's earliest and indirect form of self-knowledge." "Man first of all sees his nature as if *out* of himself, before he finds it in himself. . . . Religion is the childlike condition of humanity: in childhood a man is an object to himself under the

form of another man." "Man projects his being into objectivity, and then again makes himself an object to this projected image of himself thus converted into a subject." God is thus a mere "wishbeing." "Consciousness of God is self-consciousness, knowledge of God is self-knowledge." "The divine being is nothing else than the human nature purified, freed from the limits of the individual man, made objective." Theology is thus reduced in Feuerbach's system to anthropology (*Op. cit.*, pp. xii, xvii, 12-14, 19, 31, 33; *Sämmtliche Werke*, Vol. VIII, pp. 21, 346).

Thus by having recourse to atheistic subjectivism Feuerbach professes to be able to cure the prevalent agnostic scepticism. "How," he asked, "can I doubt of God who is my being?" (*Essence of Christianity*, p. 20). The sceptic agrees that we have none but idealized human predicates to apply to God, but while he recognizes that the predicates of God are human, he hesitates to recognize that the Divine Subject to which these predicates are attached is also human, holding that this would be atheism. Here Feuerbach falls back upon the Hegelian observation that "to deny all qualities of a being is equivalent to denying the being itself" (*Op. cit.*, p. 14), forgetting apparently, in his application of the principle, that to deny all definite, humanly *knowable* qualities is not necessarily to deny *all* qualities and therewith to deny being itself.

"He alone is the true atheist," Feuerbach pointedly remarks, "to whom love, wisdom, justice, are nothing; not he to whom merely the subject of these predicates is nothing. . . . A God who is not benevolent, not just, not wise is no God" (*Ibid.*, p. 21). Now we may willingly concede that it is better religion to revere and be devoted to divinely ideal qualities of life than to be indifferent to these while clinging to some unworthy, superstitious notion of an existent divine being. But what Feuerbach means is that benevolence, justice, wisdom and the like, partly realized in man's character or contemplated in idealized form in man's consciousness, are themselves the only God that really exists. His satirical defense of the possibility of religious knowledge is in reality a cynical betrayal of religion itself. Feuerbach was fully conscious of what he was doing. "Atheism," he wrote in the preface to his famous work, "is the secret of religion itself." "What yesterday was still religion is no longer such today," he points out, and then goes on to make a prediction which has been strikingly fulfilled in present-day religious humanism: "What today is atheism tomorrow will be religion" (*Ibid.*, p. 32).

The chief value of what Feuerbach did lies in the field of the psychology of religion; he throws some real light on the problem of the genesis of the God-idea. But neither his nor any other psychology of religion can take the place of the logic of religion. After psychology has done its best

and its worst, it is for religious epistemology and the logic of religion to assess the value of religious experience for revelation of divine reality and as a basis for the verification of religious judgments. The ultimate test, theoretical as well as practical, of religious ideas is to be found by making use of them, not in the mere accidental accompaniments of their first construction.

Similar in doctrine, but of a different spirit from Feuerbach, was F. A. Lange, the critical historian of materialism, traces of whose early religious training are discernible in his value-judgments, in spite of his rejection of metaphysics and theology. Whereas for Feuerbach the gods, as god-ideas created by man in his own image, were injurious illusions (*Ibid.*, pp. 246, 274, etc.), deceiving and misleading men when giving temporary comfort, for Lange these characteristic ideas of religion were beneficial illusions. They have "a value for our people," he insists, an aesthetic and general cultural value for persons at a certain stage of development, comparable to the value of fairy-tales in the education of children. "All poesy and all revelation are simply false, so soon as we test their material contents by the standard of exact knowledge," he assumes, but then goes on to maintain that "a dogma which is not true" may nevertheless "edify mankind and raise him above the limits of sense." "If we could entirely abolish poesy, it is a question," he feels, "whether anything would be left to make life worth living." "Why," he asks, "should not religion exist through poesy, without any need for metaphysical mediation?" (*The History of Materialism*, 1865, Eng. tr., Vol. III, pp. 280-285). He would have agreed with Rauwenhoff that "living with God" is not to be interpreted by the critical philosopher as living with God himself, but only as living with the idea of God, it being impossible to justify in critical thought the view so indispensable to religion, that there is a reality corresponding to this idea (L. W. E. Rauwenhoff, *Religionsphilosophie*, 1889, pp. 462, etc.; cf. H. Maier, *Psychologie des emotionalen Denkens*, Tübingen, 1908, p. 555).

Professor J. H. Leuba's "empirical idealism" is essentially similar. "I cannot persuade myself," he writes, "that divine personal beings, be they primitive gods or the Christian Father, have more than a subjective existence" (*A Psychological Study of Religion*, Macmillan, 1912, pp. x, 10). At the same time he frankly concedes that, believing in and communing with the gods (god-ideas) he has created because of his felt need of their "ethical support and affective comfort," man has been "brought nearer to the realization of his desires." Even belief in non-existent gods may, in his opinion, exercise a regulative, moralizing and consolidating influence upon the life of man, thus producing results sufficient to make religion a factor of the highest importance for life (*Ibid.*, pp. 14 ff, 201). "The Protestant Anglo-Saxon," he imagines, "cares very little who God is, or

even whether He is at all. But he uses Him, instinctively, from habit" (*The Monist*, Vol. XI, p. 571). At this point Leuba's psychology of religion is, to say the least, incomplete. If the man who seeks practical benefits, material or spiritual, from divine power were to be convinced of the non-existence of that object of his faith and dependence, he could no longer "use" God in the sense in which he now can, believing habitually and almost "instinctively" in the divine existence. Generally speaking, it is only because, among the religious, subjective certitude of the reality and sufficiency of God is so nearly at a maximum that careful thought as to "who God is, or even whether He is at all," is so nearly at a minimum.

Some of those who have applied subjective or psychological idealism to the religious object have been most emphatic in stressing the practical motivation underlying the genesis and use of religious ideas in general. According to Wilhelm Bender, at one time a student under Ritschl, faith is but "an accompanying phenomenon" of religious aspiration, and in its original intention purely practical. Religious activity is essentially an act of self-maintenance. So long as man can realize his life-purposes himself, the need for constructing the religious idea of God is scarcely present; but since he finds neither in himself nor in the world about him the means of carrying to its realization his ideal of a perfectly satisfactory existence, he creates the idea of a world-guiding power favorable to his ideal. In this way he would give himself the needed guarantees for the right to expect the realization of his most cherished purposes. Religion, then, is "a free form of human idealism," and man serves the gods so long as he simply seeks their help, and does not reflect about them. The God-idea is not the key of the world-riddle, but the "lever for achieving a life-ideal." It is "always the answer to the question how the highest life-purposes are to be realized under the contrary conditions which exist in the world." The validity of religious ideas means, then, from this point of view, not their being true of any objective reality, but simply their being valuable or inwardly necessary for the sustaining of aspiration and hope (*Das Wesen der Religion*, 1886, pp. 68, 69, 86, 89, 336).

Edouard LeRoy, in his book *Dogme et Critique*, written when he was a Roman Catholic modernist, undertakes to defend the dogmas of his church by interpreting them from a pragmatic, subjectivist point of view, the logic of which would bring his position fairly within the category of what we have called psychological idealism in religion. He protests against the intellectualism which would take Christian dogmas as if they had a scientific signification; when so treated the dogma turns out to be nothing but "an intangible enunciation of an indemonstrable theorem." Three illustrations of this thesis are offered in the ecclesiastical dogmas of the personality of God, the resurrection of Christ, and the "real pres-

ence" in the Mass. Intellectualistically considered, all three are such that not only is it impossible to prove them; it is impossible even to state intelligibly just what they mean. "If one conceives the divine personality after the model of a human personality idealized and pushed to perfection, this is a clear anthropomorphism." From an intellectualist point of view we seem to be asked to choose between anthropomorphism and agnosticism at best. Similarly, if we take the dogma of the resurrection of Jesus as having for its purpose the increase of our knowledge in guaranteeing the exactitude of a certain fact, the question arises, What is the exact signification of the word "resurrection"? Is it that Jesus died and came to life again? Did he reappear in a state identical with that in which he went to the cross? If not, just what does the doctrine mean? Are we not left with "a simple metaphor inconvertible into precise ideas"? Finally, in the dogma of the "real presence," just what does "presence" mean? "A being is called present when it is perceptible, or when it manifests itself by perceptible effects. But such is not the case here. The presence is mysterious, ineffable, singular, without analogy with anything which one understands under the name" (*Dogme et Critique*, 1907, pp. 15-19; cf. *The Monist*, Vol. XXV, 1917, pp. 481-523).

It is true that "a dogma has a negative sense. It excludes certain errors rather than determines precisely the truth." Thus the dogmas cited mean that God is not impersonal, that death did not put an end to the action of Jesus in the affairs of this world, and that the consecrated host should not be regarded as a mere symbol. But if we would find the positive significance of these dogmas we must take them as prescriptions of a practical nature, symbolic representations of truths of a practical order, declarations of attitude, and formulations of rules of practical conduct (*Op. cit.*, pp. 22, 25, 377. LeRoy quotes his fellow-modernist, Laberthonnière, as endorsing the taking of church dogmas in this "moral and practical sense"). Thus interpreted, the dogma, "God is personal," means, "Behave in your relations with God as in your relations with a human person." "Jesus is risen," means "Be in relation to him as you would have been before his death, as you are in the presence of a contemporary." And "the dogma of the real presence means that in the presence of the consecrated host one should have an identical attitude with that which he would have in the visible presence of Jesus" (*Op. cit.*, pp. 25, 26).

Thus it was claimed by LeRoy in this early writing of his that while "the intellectualistic conception current today makes insoluble most of the objections raised against the idea of dogma," "a doctrine of the primacy of action permits the solution of the problem without abandoning in the least the rights of thought or the demands of the dogma." Christianity, LeRoy points out, "is not a system of speculative philosophy, but a source and a rule of life, a discipline of moral and religious action,



a collection of practical means for obtaining salvation. What is there surprising then," he asks, "in the fact that its dogmas are concerned primarily with conduct rather than with pure reflective knowledge?" (*Ibid.*, p. 26).

This olive-branch held out by the pragmatist modernists to their orthodox fellow-churchmen was not grasped by the latter. And indeed it was not without logical justification that the view was denounced as heretical in the Encyclical of Pope Pius X against Modernism. Its interpretation of the dogma of the personality of God as meaning that there really is no personal God, but that to act as if there were is our duty, was too much like trying to continue to sit where the branch was just before it was sawed off. The attitude toward popular theology is much the same as that of Spinoza, when he declares, in the *Tractatus Theologico-Politicus*: "Faith does not demand that dogmas shall be true, so much as that they shall be pious, that is, such as will stir up the heart to obey." It is essentially similar, too, to the saying current among the Japanese: "Just as the seller of sweets blows a flute and sings a song, not for the sake of the tune or the song, but only that he may sell his wares, so do the monks preach doctrine, not because it is true, but only that they may lead to virtue" (G. W. Knox, *Development of Religion in Japan*, Putnam, 1907, p. 125).

Hans Vaihinger, in his sensational work, *Die Philosophie des Als Ob*, maintains that the ideas of moral freedom and an existent God are alike "indispensable fictions." The idea of man's responsible freedom is rejected as theoretically untenable, not only as contradicting "observation which shows that everything obeys unalterable laws," but as being notoriously self-contradictory, asserting responsibility for "a chance act, resulting from nothing"; and yet while "on this modern view there is nothing in this real world corresponding to the idea of liberty," "in practice it is an exceedingly necessary fiction," "because only on this basis is a high degree of culture and morality possible" (*The Philosophy of As If*, 1911, Eng. trans., Harcourt, Brace, 1924, p. 43). Similarly, according to Vaihinger—and he attributes the same meaning to Schleiermacher as theologian—all dogmas of religion are to be regarded as fictions, in contrast with hypotheses, which, properly speaking, are capable of being tested empirically and either verified or refuted. "God is not the 'father' of men, but he is to be treated and regarded as if he were." "In religion we hold to logically untenable, yes, wholly false ways of representation, although we see through their falseness. We hold to them, . . . because we recognize their necessity and indispensableness for right conduct" (*Ibid.*, Preface, and pp. 27, 28, 264, etc. Vaihinger tells us that F. A. Lange, in a letter dated May 16, 1875, expressed his full agreement with this position, saying that it would one day be a cornerstone of philo-

sophical epistemology. Curious interest attaches to the fact that Vaihinger left his book unpublished for another thirty-five years).

By way of comment upon this "philosophy of as if" it may be suggested that the obvious figurative element in the idea of God as "Father" does not require the rejection of the entire content of philosophical theism as fictitious. As for responsible moral freedom and complete scientific predeterminism, may it not be the latter that is to some extent fictitious? It may be, to use Poincaré's term, a "convenient fiction" for the scientist; but may not Vaihinger's idea of "indispensable fictions" be itself a fiction, convenient perhaps, but by no means indispensable?

Recent identifications of theology with mythology are sponsored, strangely enough, by some professors in theological seminaries; but that only shows what strange bedfellows modern psychologism sometimes makes. As for this psychologism, or subjective psychological idealism, the situation here in the religious field is essentially the same as in the general epistemological field. The interpretation of the normal object of experience as purely subjective, dependent upon consciousness for its whole existence and not simply for some of its qualities and relations, is due to a mere suggestion and leaps to an unwarranted conclusion. Because some elements in the experienced object, as experienced, are shown by psychology to have had a subjective origin, there has been a leap to the extreme conclusion that all is subjective, a mere product of the psychical processes involved in the experience of it. This is, of course, a glaring instance of *non sequitur*, and is not likely to impose upon the mind for long, once a reasonable development or restatement of the common-sense realism of everyday life and everyday religion has been effected.

Emile Durkheim, in leading up to his own definition of religion, rejects definitions in terms of a mysterious or supernatural power or of divinities, on the ground that these elements are not primitive, as compared with something else (*The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life*, Eng. tr. by J. W. Swain, Macmillan, pp. 24-35). His own definition runs as follows: "A religion is a unified system of beliefs and practices relative to sacred things, that is to say, things set apart and forbidden—beliefs and practices which unite into one single moral community called a Church, all who adhere to them." Thus defined, religion is a collective thing, and has to do with the distinction between the sacred and the profane (*Ibid.*, pp. 37, 47).

Armed with this definition of religion, Durkheim examines two widely held theories as to the elementary form of religion from which all others have been derived, namely the animistic and the naturistic. The former is rejected as not being primitive and as reducing religion to nothing

more than a system of hallucinations; the latter, as essentially erroneous, and as failing to explain the division of things into sacred and profane (*Ibid.*, pp. 48, 67, 68, 79-80, 85). More fundamental and primitive than either the animistic or the naturistic cult, and that from which these are derived forms, in Durkheim's opinion, is totemism (*Ibid.*, p. 88). The author accordingly addresses himself to a detailed study of the beliefs and rites of totemic religion (*Ibid.*, pp. 101 ff). The totem, he points out, is the flag or symbol of the clan. "While generations change, it remains the same; it is the permanent element of the social life. . . . Since religious force is nothing other than the collective and anonymous force of the clan, and since this can be represented in the mind only in the form of the totem, the totemic emblem is like the visible body of the god. Therefore it is from it that those kindly or dreadful actions seem to emanate, which the cult seeks to provoke or to prevent; consequently, it is to it that the cult is addressed. This is the explanation of why it holds the first place in the series of sacred things." This religious force, "conceived as incorporated in the totemic emblem, appears to be outside of the individuals and to be endowed with a sort of transcendence over them," but "like the clan of which it is a symbol, it can be realized only in and through them; . . . it is immanent in them and they necessarily represent it as such. They feel it present and active within them, for it is this which raises them to a superior life" (*Ibid.*, pp. 220, 221). Thus "religion ceases to be an inexplicable hallucination and takes a foothold in reality. In fact, we can say that the believer is not deceived when he believes in the existence of a moral power upon which he depends and from which he receives all that is best in himself; this power exists, it is society" (*Ibid.*, p. 225). "Religious force is only the sentiment inspired by the group in its members, but projected outside of the consciousness that experiences them, and objectified" (*Ibid.*, p. 229).

The idea of God no less than other elements is rooted in totemism, Durkheim believes, and thus in the social life and consciousness. "The great tribal god is only the ancestral spirit who finally won a pre-eminent place"—largely because of his central place in the initiation ceremonies. "The ancestral spirits are only entities forged in the image of individual souls whose origin they are destined to explain. The souls, in their turn, are only the form taken by the impersonal forces which we found at the basis of totemism, as they individualize themselves in the human body." "The notion of the great god is due entirely to the sentiment whose action we have already observed in the genesis of the most specifically totemic beliefs; this is the tribal sentiment. . . . Totemism was . . . always elaborated in the body of a tribe which was to some degree conscious of its unity. . . . It is this same sentiment of a tribal unity which is expressed

in the conception of a supreme God, common to the tribe as a whole" (*Ibid.*, pp. 293, 295-296).

Religion, then, is a reality; and in so far as religion is action, a means of making men live, science could not take its place. The case is different, however, in so far as religion is speculation. "That which science refuses to grant to religion is not its right to exist, but its right to dogmatize upon the nature of things, and the special competence which it claims for itself for knowing man and the world. As a matter of fact, it does not know itself. It does not know what it is made of, nor to what need it answers. It is itself a subject for science." Moreover, "there is no proper subject for religious speculation outside that reality to which scientific reflection is applied." However, religion "seems destined to transform itself rather than to disappear" (*Ibid.*, p. 430).

This theory of the nature and significance of the idea of God—that it is essentially simply a symbol of the society and of social values—seems to suffer from the one-sidedness that is the weakness of many interesting theories. It may be conceded that the idea of God is *incidentally* a symbol of human life and values; if religion was to have a human psychological history, it could not be otherwise. The values for the sake of which people were religious were human, social values, and the intellectual instruments employed by the religious interest in its practical aspect (i.e., the interest in increasing the production and securing the conservation of these values by adjustment to a religious Object or Factor) could not but be influenced by the social values for the sake of which they were constructed and employed. But it must be clear that from this point of view the symbolic representation of social values is *not* what religion has been primarily concerned about in its religious thinking. Religion is experimental adjustment, on the part of both the individual and the social group, to its own specific Object, and the primary concern of religious thinking is to represent that Object correctly, or at least correctly enough to secure, through the right adjustment on man's part, the practical benefits desired.\*

\*I venture to offer the considerations expressed in this paragraph as a protest not only against Durkheim's distorted picture of the nature of religion, but even against the somewhat similar one-sidedly sociological and anti-metaphysical interpretation of the religious and theological interest which is to be found in the writings of theologians so well-known as Shirley Jackson Case (*The Social Origins of Christianity*, 1923) and Shailer Mathews (*The Growth of the Idea of God*, 1931). However, I would still maintain, as against E. E. Aubrey (in *The Process of Religion*, 1933, edited by M. H. Krumbine), that I was *not* "mistaken in welcoming Dean Mathews as an epistemological realist" in the Preface to *Religious Realism* (1931). Although regarding the word God not as an ontological term, but as "conceptual," anthropomorphic, and instrumental, Dr. Mathews claims that it is nevertheless inevitably and legitimately used to refer to and guide our adjustments to a cosmic personality-producing activity which is as real independently of our experience as is electricity or any other cosmic power. This creative power he holds to be an objective environment personally respon-

Philosophers who arrive—or profess to have arrived—at an a-theistic subjectivism, or, as we have called it, psychological idealism with reference to the religious Object, not by the psychological path but over a dialectical course, may be represented by the late Professor J. M. E. McTaggart, of the University of Cambridge. In his book entitled *Some Dogmas of Religion*, religion is defined as “an emotion resting on the conviction of a harmony between ourselves and the universe at large” (Arnold, 1906, p. 3).

Having in mind the way in which the word “God” is used in Western theology, McTaggart sets out with the definition of God as “a being who is personal, supreme, and good” (*Ibid.*, pp. 186, 188). Within the limits of this definition there are “three possibilities: a creative and omnipotent God, a God who is creative but not omnipotent, and a God who is neither creative nor omnipotent.” Creativeness is defined as meaning that all reality other than God is entirely dependent on God, while God is not in any way dependent on this other reality (*Ibid.*, p. 189). Omnipotence is defined simply, as ability to do anything whatever (*Ibid.*, pp. 188, 202). This “ability to do anything” is interpreted in an absurdly abstract and extreme manner, as meaning not only ability to prevent the free volitions of man, but ability to create a universe which was not universe, or a man who was not a man, all of which would be impossible because absurd (*Ibid.*, p. 203). Or, less abstractly, McTaggart asks, Could God create a being which He could not subsequently destroy? Whatever the answer, He is shown to be not omnipotent (*Ibid.*, p. 204). Furthermore, no omnipotent being could be personal, for personality involves recognition of the existence of something which is not the person itself, and a person would not be omnipotent unless he could exist without there being another (*Ibid.*, pp. 204-205). Furthermore, whatever may be thought of these arguments, there is the obvious conclusion that an omnipotent All-Creator cannot be perfectly good, since some evil undoubtedly exists, either evil which is correctly judged to be evil or else the error which incorrectly judges it to be evil (*Ibid.*, pp. 208-210). “The proper conclusion is . . . that, if there is a God, he is not omnipotent” (*Ibid.*, p. 217).

To this argument the obvious reply is that there is no motive for entertaining the idea of a God who is omnipotent in any such absurd and self-contradictory sense of the term as that given by Dr. McTaggart. Theists would agree with him that the God he is arguing about does not and could not exist, but this is not what they mean by an omnipotent God. It should not be forgotten that the *omnipotens* of the creeds translates

---

sive and conditioning our own personal life as truly as the atmosphere conditions our chemical life. (This interpretation is not only based upon statements repeatedly made in *The Growth of the Idea of God*, but follows closely the language of a personal letter from Dr. Mathews, dated December 7, 1939.)

the Greek *pantokrator*, which simply means *ruler of all*. If God's omnipotence be defined as His ability to do whatever He ought to do, ability to do whatever man needs to have God do, whatever perfect judgment and perfect good will would suggest, and if God's creativeness be not made so all-inclusive as to include everything in the volitions of finite agents, it becomes impossible to show, by any such argument as McTaggart's, that the idea is not a self-consistent and theoretically permissible hypothesis.

But, having demonstrated to his own satisfaction the absurdity of the idea of an omnipotent creator, McTaggart takes up the second alternative, namely, the hypothesis of a non-omnipotent, all-creative God (*Ibid.*, pp. 221, 223). At the moment at which an all-creative God creates, nothing exists except Himself. "Whatever happens must be explained from his nature and from his nature alone, for there is nothing else anywhere" (*Ibid.*, p. 229). But "whatever a creator does, he is completely self-determined in doing it, for there is nothing but his own nature to determine him. Therefore [since evil exists in the universe] he is wholly self-determined in producing, among other things, much that is evil. Now when a being who is completely self-determined produces evil, knowing that it is evil, can we say that such a being is good? I do not see how we can do so. . . . A person whose nature is such that he spontaneously produces what he knows to be evil—what is this but the definition of a wicked person?" (*Ibid.*, p. 233). The conclusion is drawn that even a non-omnipotent creator of the universe could not be God, since he would not be perfectly good.

Obviously, this conclusion follows logically only when what is presupposed is that God is the sole creator of everything in the universe, even of the freest deeds of men. But theists do not commonly hold to this view of the creative activity of God, human freedom being regarded by them as itself creative, within however narrow limits. This brings us to the third alternative, namely, the hypothesis of a God who is neither omnipotent nor creative, as McTaggart defines these terms. Such a God McTaggart calls, in a way that strongly suggests the fallacy of *excluded middle*, non-omnipotent and non-creative—"less than a creator." "If we make God to be less than a creator," he goes on to say, "we make it possible that he should be a person, and that he should be good" (*Ibid.*, p. 258). Then, ignoring religious and other possible grounds of practical assurance, he goes on to say, rather dogmatically, "If God's moral character is saved by limiting his power, we have no right to be confident as to the eventual victory of those ends in which God is interested" (*Ibid.*, p. 259). If there is a non-omnipotent God, he may be thought of, without contradiction, as "a person who fights for the good and who may be victorious" (*Ibid.*, p. 260). But does such a God exist? McTaggart's answer

is that "when the non-omnipotent God is also taken as non-creative, there seems . . . only one reason why we should not believe in his existence—namely, that there is no reason why we should believe in it" (*Ibid.*, p. 260).

But this may well be challenged. There are other reasons, not amounting to absolute demonstration on all points, perhaps, but well worthy of consideration, it may be, why we should be encouraged to believe in God, a being personal, supreme and good, who is powerful enough for our religious needs and creatively related to the natural world and to human life, even if not the sole creator of human volitions. McTaggart himself gives anyone who is not an out-and-out idealist a clew to one out of several possible lines of such theistic reasoning, when he admits that "if we accept the existence of matter at all, optimism . . . does find the existence of God essential to it. . . . The existence of God seems to be necessary for optimism unless we are able to hold that all existence is spiritual, and that all spirits form a system such that it has a greater tendency to produce good than to produce evil" (*Ibid.*, pp. 271-272).

Mr. J. Middleton Murry's book entitled *God* (Harpers, 1929) begins with an account of the author's own mystical experience and then records the way in which he finally "succeeded in disintoxicating himself" from its effects. As he whimsically puts it, "'God' and I are a little tired of each other. It is time for us to part. This book is the story of the parting." According to Mr. Murry, as he felt and thought at the time of writing this book, God as the focus in which ideal values are concentrated is necessarily unreal, an intellectual and imaginative fiction. The object of mystical experience (which is similar, psychologically, to the anesthetic experience) is not God, but the all-pervading unity of the universe and of man himself, a unity immediately grasped by feeling in the mystical state. What the mystics discover is not God, but a new man, the product principally of the mystic state, and authorized, by virtue of this experience and discovery, to deliver a prophetic message to his day and generation. Mr. Murry is here at the opposite extreme from the typical mystic; God, so far from being the sole reality, is for him not real at all. He sets his position over against that of Catholic orthodoxy, which, in his opinion, is the only Christianity (*Op. cit.*, pp. 27-29, 71, 72, 84, 105, 112, 113, 118, 140, 143, 172, 177, 225-230, 245, 247, 265, 321, 338, 341-342).

But now, a decade later, it turns out that Mr. Murry has changed his mind again. He has become an Anglo-Catholic, and according to a recent announcement is preparing to take orders as a priest of the Church of England. Presumably he now believes in God as something more than "an intellectual and imaginative fiction."

## Chapter V

### PSYCHIATRIC INTERPRETATIONS OF RELIGION

---

The psychoanalysts and their philosophies of religion and of the God-idea next demand our attention. We shall be concerned principally with Freud, Jung, and Adler, and some of their followers.

Dr. Sigmund Freud, after some study with Janet, developed the psychiatric technique which he called psychoanalysis, under the guidance of a medical philosophy which has been termed *pansexuality*. According to this theory there is an active sexual life in infancy, the libido of the male child coming to be fixated on the mother through the act of sucking. Freud has difficulty in explaining how the libido of the female child becomes fixated, as he assumes it does, on the father. His theory is that at first it was fixated on the mother, but that later, because of the weaning process and other obscure causes, it was alienated from the mother and transferred to the father. But why the libido of the male child is not alienated from the mother at weaning is left obscure, and to supply the still lacking explanation of the transference of the female child's libido to the father, Freud has indulged in some very far-fetched and not at all plausible explanations (*New Introductory Lectures on Psychoanalysis*, Norton, 1933, pp. 162-181).

Now since the overt expression of these libidinous and incestuous impulses is strongly disapproved socially (by the parents and people in general), the impulses, without ceasing to be active, are, according to Freud's theory, repressed under protest, as it were, into the "unconscious," a realm of mind deeper down than the "preconscious," which is the abode of those ordinary memories which are easily recalled. Associated bundles of these disapproved and rebellious impulses, repressed into the unconscious, but seeking expression, are called complexes. The most important of these, the Oedipus complex, is the repressed infantile sexual attachment of the son for the mother (that of the daughter for the father being sometimes called the Electra complex). These repressed complexes, like subterranean volcanoes, are constantly seeking opportunity to erupt into consciousness, but the conscious and preconscious life, being influenced by social disapproval, comes to be organized to prevent any



such breaking forth of repressed sexuality into consciousness. This organization of elements to prevent expression of the repressed, Freud in his earlier writings calls the "Censor." Being unable to pass the Censor in their original undisguised form, the repressed elements in the Unconscious adopt various disguises whereby they may escape the veto of the Censor and come to expression. Among the disguised expressions of repressed sexuality, and especially of infantile sexuality, are our dreams,\* phantasies, many of our choices and decisions, slips of the tongue or pen, and many other phenomena which come under the "psychopathology of everyday life," and the characteristic symptoms of neurotic and psychopathic patients. But in addition to all this, Freud would explain, as disguised forms of expression of repressed infantile sexuality, the characteristic activities and experiences of the artistic life, of morals, of religion, and indeed of civilized social life in general. Freud's psychoanalytic procedure involves a bringing of these repressed desires to consciousness, in which process there often takes place a transference of the fixation of affection from its original object to some other, which becomes a symbol or surrogate of the original object (*The Interpretation of Dreams*, Allen, 1913; *Psychopathology of Everyday Life*, Macmillan; *General Introduction to Psychoanalysis*, Liveright, 1920).

Freud's philosophy of religion is worked out in his book, *Totem and Taboo*. Here we have what the author calls a first effort to apply the viewpoints and results of psychoanalysis to unexplained problems of racial psychology (*Totem and Taboo*, 1912, Eng. tr., Moffatt, Yard, 1919, p. v). The book ventures "to find the original meaning of totemism through its infantile traces, i.e., through the indications in which it reappears in the development of our own children" (*Ibid.*).† The argument proceeds as follows: Exogamy is associated with totemism; members of the same totem are not allowed to marry each other (*Ibid.*, p. 6). Savages commonly show a strong dread of incest (*Ibid.*, p. 9). This is a subtle infantile trait, and reappears in the life of the neurotic (*Ibid.*, pp. 27-28). The nucleus of totemism is the taboo against killing and eating the totem (*Ibid.*, p. 39). Taboos are very ancient prohibitions forced upon a generation of primitive people from without—probably by an earlier generation. They are also prohibitions concerning something for which there existed a strong desire. The attitude toward the taboo prohibition is thus ambivalent; unconsciously there is a strong desire to transgress the rule, but

\* Freud claims that he "never put forward" any statement to the effect that "all dreams are of a sexual nature" (*Op. cit.*, p. 17). He has written as if this were his theory, however.

† The general presupposition is that all supernatural objects, gods and demons alike, "are only the product of the psychic life of man; they have been created out of something" (*Ibid.*, p. 41). The dogmatism of this assumption is no less in Freud than in other representatives of religious psychologism examined in this and the preceding chapter.

consciously this is prevented by fear. The oldest and most important taboo prohibitions are against killing the totem animal and against sexual intercourse with totem companions of the other sex. These, then, Freud concludes, must have been the oldest and strongest desires of mankind (*Ibid.*, pp. 52-54).

These taboo prohibitions demand explanation, and briefly put, Freud's explanation is as follows: In some way, unconsciously, the totem animal has come to be fixated as a surrogate for the actual human father or ancestor, the feelings which existed toward the actual father being transferred to the animal. The feelings in both cases are ambivalent, namely admiration and antagonism, or more explicitly, on the one hand love and friendliness, on the other fear, hatred, and the desire to kill (*Ibid.*, pp. 217, 218). In primitive sacrifice the killing of the sacred totem animal was forbidden the individual, being only justified when the whole kin assumed the responsibility (*Ibid.*, p. 224). The practice was marked by mourning over the death of the totem-animal, and also by a joyful, holiday spirit. The explanation of the mourning is found by Freud in the fact that the totem was a substitute for the father (*Ibid.*, p. 232). The explanation of the holiday spirit he finds bound up with the Oedipus complex. He imagines a primitive state of society in which the jealous father kept all the females for himself and drove away the growing sons. One day the expelled brothers slew and (as cannibals) ate the father (*Ibid.*, pp. 233-234). "The totem feast, . . . perhaps mankind's first celebration, would be the repetition and commemoration of this memorable criminal act with which so many things began: social organization, moral restrictions, and religion" (*Ibid.*, p. 234). After the killing and eating, the suppressed tender emotion (toward the father) asserted itself; they undid their deed by saying the killing of the father-substitute, the totem, was not allowed, and to conciliate their murdered father by obedience to his will they renounced the results of their criminal act by denying themselves the liberated women. And so the two taboos of totemism arose out of the sons' sense of guilt for the slaying of their father (*Ibid.*, pp. 236, 237).

Thus the totem, as the surrogate for the father, becomes a religious object, which is believed to protect in a fatherly way his now penitent and obedient sons. "All later religions [are] attempts to solve the same problem, . . . to conciliate the injured father through subsequent obedience." "The ambivalence attached to the father-complex continues in totemism, and in religions in general" (*Ibid.*, p. 239). "The god at bottom is nothing but an exalted father" (*Ibid.*, p. 242). "Thus the memory of that first great act of sacrifice had proved to be indestructible despite all attempts to forget it, and just . . . when man strove to get as far away as possible from the motive, the undisturbed repetition of it had to reappear in the form of the god-sacrifice" (*Ibid.*, p. 250. For Freud's final

restatement and reaffirmation of his theory, see his last work, *Moses and Monotheism*, Knopf, 1939, pp. 126-160, 206-216).

The theory is an ingenious one, but to anyone but its proud author it must seem rather far-fetched. One can make almost anything appear plausible if he wants to and if he thinks long enough about it. "Directed thinking" is not always scientific. Witness Freud's explanation of the origin of agriculture in terms of the Oedipus complex, which reaches the very nadir of absurdity (*Totem and Taboo*, p. 251). Freud himself from the beginning felt certain difficulties in this theory; for example, in primitive sacrifice the father is represented twice: in the god to whom the sacrifice is offered, and in the totem-animal sacrificed (*Ibid.*, pp. 243, 246). He can only suggest that the totem may have been the first form of the father-substitute, the god being a later one in which the father regained his human form (*Ibid.*, p. 244). But more serious is the difficulty expressed in the admission, "I am at a loss to indicate the place of the great maternal deities who perhaps everywhere preceded the paternal deities" (*Ibid.*, p. 246). Besides, two "weighty objections" are recognized, namely, 1) basing everything upon the assumption of a psyche of the mass in which psychic processes occur as in the psychic life of the individual, and 2) letting the emotional sense of guilt for a deed survive for thousands of years, remaining effective in generations which could not have known anything of this deed (*Ibid.*, pp. 259-260).

Still, in this book, Freud holds to the universal prevalence and influence of the Oedipus complex, and finds in it "the nucleus of all neuroses, so far as our present knowledge of them goes," and at the same time "the beginnings of religion, ethics, society and art" (*Ibid.*, p. 258). And yet, only a few years after the publication of *Totem and Taboo*, Freud wrote a paper, "The Passing of the Oedipus Complex" (*Collected Papers*, Vol. II, 1924), in which, while he still assumes that the Oedipus Complex is present in all infants (whether innately or as an infantile acquisition), he claims that in normal development it is eradicated in early childhood, persisting to adult life only in neurotics. Professor McDougall's comment is sufficient: "Freud thus leaves himself for the present in the position that all the vast sociological structure which he has reared on the Oedipus complex is completely deprived of its foundation; or we have to suppose that religion and morality have been built up and are maintained solely by the efforts of infants and neurotics, the sole possessors of the Oedipus complex. . . . The alleged evidence of the existence of the complex in all infants was found in the dreams of normal adults, and . . . since Freud now admits that the complex does not exist in such adults, there remains no ground for assuming its existence in those infants who become normal adults. . . . Therefore . . . Freud should relieve himself of the need to construct fanciful and wildly improbable theories of the

destruction of the complex in the course of normal development, by throwing overboard the dogma that the complex is universally present in infancy" (*Outline of Abnormal Psychology*, Scribners, 1926, p. 419).

Besides, Freud's pansexuality has been rejected as a gross exaggeration and distortion of the facts, even by the ablest and most responsible of those who have been his pupils and deeply influenced by his general method (e.g., C. G. Jung and Alfred Adler). What Jung thinks about his former master may be gleaned from his remarkable work, *Modern Man in Search of a Soul* (Harcourt, Brace, 1933, pp. 134, 135). "What Freud has to say about sexuality . . . as well as what he says about incest and the like, can be taken as the truest expression of his own psychic make-up. He has given adequate form to what he has noted in himself. I am no opponent of Freud's; I am merely presented in that light by his own short-sightedness and that of his pupils. No experienced psychotherapist can deny having met with dozens of cases at least which answer in all essentials to Freud's descriptions. By his avowal of what he has found in himself, Freud has assisted at the birth of a great truth about man."

"Both schools [Freud's and Adler's] . . . deserve reproach for emphasizing the pathological aspect of life and for interpreting man too exclusively in the light of his defects. A convincing example of this in Freud's case is his inability to understand religious experience, as is clearly shown in his book, *The Future of an Illusion*. For my part I prefer to look at man in the light of what in him is healthy and sound. . . . Freud's teaching is definitely one-sided in that it generalizes from facts that are relevant only to neurotic states of mind; its validity is really confined to those states. . . . In any case Freud's is not a psychology of the healthy mind."

Furthermore, it is not too much to say that Freud's pansexuality has been definitely refuted as a result of the investigation of war-neuroses by Dr. W. H. R. Rivers and others. Dr. Rivers not only found an obvious explanation of the fear-dreams of invalided soldiers in the terrifying experiences through which they had recently passed ("Affect in the Dream," in *British Journal of Psychology*, Vol. XII); he also found in the phenomena of what was called "shell-shock" the confirmation of Freud's general theory that neurotic symptoms are disguised expressions of something more fundamental and instinctive, and at the same time the refutation of Freud's favorite theory that this "something more fundamental" was the sexual instinct. On the contrary he found, obviously enough, that what "shell-shock" disguised was not sex but fear and the instinct of self-preservation. "The first result of the dispassionate study of the psycho-neuroses of warfare in relation to Freud's scheme was to show that in the vast majority of cases there is no reason to suppose that factors derived from the sexual life played any essential part in causation, but that these

disorders became explicable as the result of another instinct, one even more fundamental than that of sex—the instinct of self-preservation, especially those forms of it which are adapted to protect the animal from danger” (*Instinct and the Unconscious*, 2nd. ed., 1922, pp. 4, 5).\*

In a later slight volume, Dr. Freud returns to the theme of religion (*The Future of an Illusion*, Eng. tr., Liveright, 1928). Naturally he is still sure that religious ideas are “illusions” (*Ibid.*, p. 24), and, strangely enough, while pointing out that *Totem and Taboo* was not written to explain the origin of religions but only of totemism (*Ibid.*, p. 39), he seems not to realize the extent to which the foundations of his theory have been demolished by his own hands, for we find him self-confidently saying, “I hope you will admit that in that book a number of very remarkable isolated facts are brought together into a consistent whole” (*Ibid.*, p. 40). What he grapples with is the problem “why in the long run the animal god did not suffice, and why it was replaced by the human” (*Ibid.*). His simple and plausible explanation is that “the mother, who satisfies hunger, becomes the first ‘love-object,’” that “in this function the mother is soon replaced by the stronger father,” and that “when the child grows up and finds that he is destined to remain a child forever, and that he can never do without protection against unknown and mighty powers, he invests these with the traits of the father-figure; he creates for himself the gods, of whom he is afraid, whom he seeks to propitiate, and to whom he nevertheless entrusts the task of protecting him” (*Ibid.*, pp. 41, 42). The threefold task of the gods is to “exorcise terrors of nature, . . . reconcile one to the cruelty of fate, particularly as shown in death, and . . . make amends for the sufferings and privations that the communal life of culture has imposed on man” (*Ibid.*, p. 30).

There is probably some truth in this psychological account of the genesis of the idea of the cosmic Father-God (cf. F. Tracy, *The Psychology of Childhood*, Heath, 7th ed., 1909, pp. 189-192). But there is nothing here to show that the idea is wholly illusory. In so far as it conflicts with science or would offer a substitute for scientific investigation of the cause and cure of human ills, religion is no doubt open to criticism; but there is an ultimate dependence of man which scientific knowledge can never cure, and there we have a perennial root of religion. Freud, we may be sure, *would not have concluded from his study that religion is wholly illusory, if he had not originally presupposed it* (See *Totem and Taboo*, pp. 40-42, etc.).

\* As against what he takes to be Freud's too exclusive emphasis upon the unconscious, the late Dr. Otto Rank recalled attention to the fact that much mental derangement is due to conflicts in consciousness, and developed a technique for “will therapy.” *V. Will Therapy*, 1936. For a recent critique of the scientific character of Freud's work see Abraham Meyerson's article in the November-December, 1939, issue of the *American Journal of Psychiatry*. Cf. also W. Kaempfert, *N. Y. Times*, Oct. 1, 1939.

In the last chapter of his recent *New Introductory Lectures on Psychoanalysis*, Freud returns once more to a consideration of religion. Here he follows the main lines of J. G. Frazer's theory of the relations of religion to magic on the one hand and to science on the other, but supplements this with a restatement of his own peculiar theory of the Oedipus complex. The religious *Weltanschauung*, infantile and illusory as it is, according to Freud, nevertheless had a predecessor in animism, with its associated practice of magic. "The main achievement of religion, as compared with animism, lies in the psychic binding of the fear of demons. Nevertheless, the evil spirit still has a place in the religious system as a relic of the previous age" (*Op. cit.*, pp. 225, 227). In the obviously unscientific character of such religious ideas as that of miracle, together with the supposed insolubility of the problem of evil, and Freud's own psychoanalytic tracing of "the origin of religion to the helplessness of childhood, and its content to the persistence of the wishes and needs of childhood into maturity" (*Ibid.*, p. 229), is found what is held to be a sufficient basis for rejecting the whole religious *Weltanschauung* as illusory. Only the scientific *Weltanschauung*, based upon the natural sciences and psychology, can be regarded as satisfactory. Now we would admit, and not only admit but strongly maintain, that any tenable religious world-view must do full justice to science, including whatever scientific knowledge there may be in the field of religion; but it has the right to supplement scientific knowledge by a reasonable formulation of a religious faith, based upon the tested values of spiritual life.

Alfred Adler, as Freud's pupil, was deeply influenced by him (*The Neurotic Constitution*, Eng. tr., Moffatt, Yard, 1916, 1921, p. 53), but rejects his pansexuality doctrine (*Individual Psychology*, Harcourt, Brace, 1925, 1929, p. 17) and the Oedipus-complex theory (*The Neurotic Constitution*, pp. 32, 64). He rejects the theory that character has an endocrine basis. "There is no organ, no matter in what condition it is, that would necessarily and irrevocably force an individual to some particular attitude in life. . . . The new positional or contextual psychology . . . will force the present dispositional or constitutional psychology to strike its colors" (*Understanding Human Nature*, Eng. tr., Greenberg, 1927, pp. 187, 188).

Adler's fundamental thesis is that "every neurosis is an attempt to free oneself from a feeling of inferiority in order to gain a feeling of superiority" (*Individual Psychology*, p. 23). "Throughout the whole period of development the child possesses," he maintains, "a feeling of inferiority in its relations both to parents and the world at large. . . . This feeling of inferiority is the cause of his continual restlessness as a child, his craving for action, his playing of rôles, the pitting of his strength against that of others," etc. (*Ibid.*, p. 13. Has a kitten or a puppy an inferiority feeling

and is this what makes it restlessly active?). "The whole potential educability of the child depends upon this feeling of insufficiency" (*Ibid.*, pp. 13, 14). But in some children, "through inherited inferior organs . . . the normal feeling of weakness and helplessness is enormously intensified and grows into a deeply felt sense of inferiority" (*Ibid.*, p. 18). Adler tells us that it was through his study of speech inferiority that there came to light "a remarkable relationship between somatic inferiority and psychic overcompensation"; so that he gained "a fundamental viewpoint, viz., that the realization of somatic inferiority by the individual becomes for him a permanent impelling force for the development of his psyche" (*Neurotic Constitution*, p. 1). Ridicule and punishment lead to a still greater intensification of this feeling of inferiority (*Individual Psychology*, pp. 18, 19). When this takes place beyond a certain point there tends to be a repression of the inferiority feeling into the unconscious where it becomes an inferiority complex, causing either an abnormal striving for superiority or, if that should fail of its end, an over-compensation through the use of some fiction (Adler acknowledges the influence of Vaihinger—*The Neurotic Constitution*, 1916, pp. 30, 36; *Individual Psychology*, pp. 8, 230), as a means of accomplishing a flight from reality.

Adler's theory of religion is that it is essentially such a flight from reality, a compensation for felt inferiority by means of the characteristic fictions of religion. "The compensatory result of the feeling of inferiority" is "the Deity, the guiding Idea apperceived in the form of a person or an event" (*Neurotic Constitution*, 1921, p. 55). "Chronically misunderstood people beat a retreat into religion, where they proceed to do just what they have done before. They complain and commiserate with themselves and shift their pains upon the shoulders of a complacent God. . . . They believe that God . . . is concerned entirely with serving them" (*Understanding Human Nature*, pp. 263-264). "The neurotic keeps before his eye his God, his idol, his ideal of personality, and clings to his guiding principle, losing sight meanwhile of reality, whereas the normal person is always ready to dispense with this crutch, this aid, and reckon unhampered with reality. . . . The normal individual, too, may and does create his deity, feels drawn upward, but never loses sight of reality and always takes it into account as he is called upon to act" (*The Neurotic Constitution*, 1921, p. 33). "Whoever takes this goal of godlikeness seriously or literally, will soon be compelled to flee from real life and compromise by seeking a life within life; if fortunate, in art, but more generally in pietism, neuroses, or crime" (*Individual Psychology*, quoted by McDougall, *op. cit.*, p. 430).

The principal criticisms to be made against Adler's theory are three. He exaggerates the importance of the feeling of inferiority, important as it undoubtedly is (*cf.* McDougall, *Outline of Abnormal Psychology*, p.

433. His own very noticeably short stature, with the inferiority-feeling to which it gave rise, was no doubt, as he himself intimated, a factor not only in his ambition but also in suggesting his theory and in his consequent success). In the second place, Adler fails to see, like Vaihinger, that one cannot make full use of religious ideas and at the same time regard them as mere fictions. In the third place, he fails to recognize that religion is the outcome of a normal and universal human inferiority, man's dependence in a universe in which he has values absolutely worth conserving and which he is by himself unable adequately either to produce or to conserve; also that religion at its best is a supplementing of this real inferiority. Man can verify the hypothesis of a religious reality which enables him to produce true values more effectively; and he can reasonably believe in a religious reality which will conserve his highest values as fully as he needs to have them conserved.

C. G. Jung began as a disciple of Freud, but soon developed some sharp differences from the point of view of his master. Freud speaks of the earlier period as the time when Jung "was still content to be a mere psychoanalyst and did not yet want to be a prophet" (*General Introduction to Psychoanalysis*, p. 232). One important difference was Jung's rejection of Freud's pansexuality theory ("On Psychical Energy," in *Contributions to Analytic Psychology*, Harcourt, Brace), but this is simply one aspect of the contrast between the two positions, a contrast which will become evident as we proceed with the exposition of Jung's views. Jung was also influenced by the theory of Rank (*Der Künstler, Aufsätze zu einer Sexualpsychologie*) that myths are the mass-dreams of a people, and also by Abraham's suggestions that the myth is a persisting fragment from the infantile soul-life of the people, that the dream is the myth of the individual, and that we find good examples of wish-fulfilment and symbolism in fairy tales (Jung, *Psychology of the Unconscious*, Eng. tr., Moffatt, Yard, 1916, p. 29; see also p. xx).

There are two fundamentally different ways of thinking, according to Jung: directed or adapted thinking, of which science is a typical expression, and what may be called dream or phantasy thinking. The former seeks to imitate and adapt itself to reality, and is troublesome and exhausting; the latter is easy, because it affords an escape from reality and is a spontaneous play of imagination under the drive of our egotistic wishes (*Ibid.*, pp. 22, 31, 36). Phantasy thinking tends, if not corrected by adapted thinking, to produce an overwhelmingly subjectively distorted idea of the world, comparable with the world of our dreams, and, as contrasted with the modern scientific world-view, a view similar to that imagined by the ancients, by savages, and by young children (*Ibid.*, pp. 25, 27, 28, 35, 36, etc.). Its typical product is mythology; myth-making begins



when phantasies begin to be taken for realities, a process easily discovered among children (*Ibid.*, pp. 24, 30).

Before going into Jung's theory in its religious aspects, as suggested by this reference to mythology, let us consider more fully his psychology of phantasy thinking. Phantasy thinking follows the principle of desire, in contrast with the principle of reality fundamental to science (*Ibid.*, p. 456). Some wish lies at the root of it, but the wish is not always consciously recognized as such; in fact it is generally an unconscious wish, of disturbing nature, often originally sexual in nature, but commonly disguised and desexualized in its manifestation in the symbolic images of phantasy (*Ibid.*, pp. 40, 67, 461). Phantasy thinking is thus an escape from reality, and a subjective compensation, by means of an imaginary reality, for failure to realize objectively the fulfilment of a wish that has been repressed into the unconscious (*Ibid.*, pp. 98, 263). The psychic energy which drives to phantasy thinking, Jung still, with Freud, calls *libido*, but as he uses the term, it is no longer purely sexual, but is more like Bergson's *élan vital*, a life-surge or "drive," of which sexual desire is only one manifestation (*Ibid.*, pp. xxvi f.; *Psychological Types*, Eng. tr., Harcourt, Brace, 1923, p. 571).

Moreover, Jung leans heavily on the theory of the inheritance of acquired characters (*v.* McDougall, *Outline of Abnormal Psychology*, pp. 189-190). He holds that certain archetypes or racial dispositions persist in a collective Unconscious, that certain archaic tendencies find a dreamy re-echo in the phantasies of the individual and the myths of the race (*Psychology of the Unconscious*, p. 35). The mythical tradition does not give an account of the old events, but rather acts in such a way as to reveal a thought which is common to humanity and is now once more rejuvenated (*Ibid.*, p. 39).\*

In phantasy thinking the libido of the repressed racial wish attaches itself to an unreal object, in which it finds its compensation. The putting forth of the repressed contents into seeming objectivity is called *projection*. It is present in exaggerated form in paranoia, but in its milder and more usual forms it may be characterized as infantile thinking (*Ibid.*, pp. 73, 262-263). When such thinking is characteristic of an individual the phenomenon is called regression. There are two main psychological types, the extravert, who puts the world above the self, and the introvert, who puts the self above the world (*Psychological Types*, pp. 9, 12). In every pronounced type there is a tendency towards compensation for the one-

\* In *Modern Man in Search of a Soul* (Harcourt, Brace 1933), Jung charges that it is "wrong to regard the unconscious as the derivative of consciousness. Consciousness is a late-born descendant of the unconscious *psyche*" (*Op. cit.*, pp. 216, 217). This view is at the opposite of Hocking's view, according to which there is nothing in the subconscious which was not previously in the conscious (*The Meaning of God in Human Experience*, Appendix I). Jung also disagrees here with Freud, Adler, and Rivers.

sidedness of the type (*Ibid.*, p. 10), but the introvert is particularly given to securing this through phantasy thinking. "Whoever introverts libido—i.e., to say, whoever takes it away from a real object without putting in its place a real compensation—is overtaken by the inevitable result of introversion. The libido which is turned inward into the subject awakens again from among the sleeping remembrances one which contains the path upon which earlier the libido once had come to the real object . . . the father and the mother" (*Psychology of the Unconscious*, p. 98).

This brings us to Jung's theory of religion. In the racial Unconscious lies an Oedipus complex with its "father-and-mother imago," which becomes reanimated regressively in religion and organized into a system. Religion's "mystic feelings are the unconscious memories of the tender emotions of the first childhood" (*Ibid.*, p. 99). Jung's general theory of religion is introduced as follows: "Every man has eyes and all his senses to perceive that the world is dead, cold and unending, and he has never yet seen a God, nor brought to light the existence of such from empirical necessity. On the contrary there was need of phantastic, indestructible optimism, and one far removed from all sense of reality, in order, for example, to discover in the shameful death of Christ really the highest salvation and redemption of the world. Thus one can indeed withhold from a child the substance of earlier myths, but not take from him the need for mythology. One can say that should it happen that all traditions in the world were cut off with a single blow, then with the succeeding generation the whole mythology and history of religion would start over again. Only a few individuals succeed in throwing off mythology in a time of a certain intellectual supremacy—the mass never frees itself. Explanations are of no avail; they merely destroy the transitory form of manifestation, but not the creating impulse" (*Ibid.*, p. 30). "The idea of a masculine creative deity is a derivation of the 'Father Imago,' and aims . . . to replace the discarded infantile father-transference in such a way that for the individual the passing from the nearer circle of the family into the wider circle of human society may be simpler or made easier" (*Ibid.*, pp. 55, 56). "Since psychologically understood the divinity is nothing else than a projected complex of representation which is accentuated in feeling according to the degree of religiousness of the individual, so God is to be considered as the representation of a certain sum of energy (libido). This energy therefore appears projected (metaphysically) because it works from the unconscious outwards, when it is dislodged from there, as psychoanalysis shows" (*Ibid.*, p. 71). Thus "the gods are libido" and "the divine in us is the libido" (*Ibid.*, p. 227), and despite the assurance and strength which accrue to the religious man (*Ibid.*, p. 262) from the mythological projections of the racial libido, these religious symbols are intellectually misleading, so that in due course "belief should be replaced

by understanding; then we would keep the beauty of the symbol, but still remain free from the depressing results of submission to belief. This would be the psychoanalytic cure for belief and disbelief" (*Ibid.*, p. 263).

In appreciation of Jung's theory of religion it should be said that much religion is weakened by uncorrected extremes of wishful and infantile thinking and a self-deceptive escape from reality. But this is not necessarily true of all religion, and religion can, by critical thought and reference to experience, avoid this danger. The contrast between phantasy thinking and the directed and adapted thought of science is made too absolute by Jung. Science has need of the play of creative imagination and intuition to suggest new hypotheses and new experimental tests. Religious thinking can adopt to a very great extent the principle of empirical verification or refutation of working hypotheses. Theological thinking is directed and adaptive as well as imaginative, and conceivably it may be even to some extent scientific. There is a fundamental optimism about the religious hypothesis, the practical value of which Jung recognizes, and while much of what is affirmed on the basis of religious faith transcends verification in the present condition of our experience, even so, it may be subjected to logical and critical philosophical evaluation.

The trouble with Jung's theory fundamentally is to be found in his initial position. After the manner of many men of science whose philosophy, such as it is, is positivistic in nature, he not only feels that as a psychologist he "has to disregard the claim of every creed to be the unique and eternal truth" (*Psychology and Religion*, Yale Univ. Press, 1938, p. 7). "Nobody," he claims, "can know what the ultimate things are" (*Ibid.*, p. 114). As for himself, he virtually assumes that religion deals with unreality, and so he has to find a way of accounting for its persistence, a fact which is amazing if the religious hypothesis be not essentially true. This needed explanation he finds in a highly speculative and even "phantastic" theory of a collective racial unconscious, in which lies a repressed Oedipus complex, making man perennially religious in spite of himself. All this is extremely precarious as a hypothesis, and by no means verified. There is a much more obvious explanation of the persistence of religion, as we shall see.

Increasingly in recent years, as shown especially in one of his later books, *Modern Man in Search of a Soul* (Tr. by C. F. Baynes, London and New York, 1933), Jung has learned to appreciate very highly the therapeutic value of religion. Even in his earlier work on *Analytic Psychology* he already testified that he had come to the conclusion that "religious motive forces" are "psychologically valuable factors" which "must receive positive consideration at the hands of the analyst" (Quoted by J. A. Hadfield in *The Psychology of Power*, Macmillan, 1919, 1923, p. 52). In the later book to which reference has been made, Jung expresses the convic-

tion that "the future task of psychology will be the investigation of [the] spiritual determinants" of psychic processes. Not only is "the moral attitude . . . a real factor in life; . . . certain religious convictions not founded on reason are a necessity of life for many persons" (*Op. cit.*, pp. 224, 225; cf. *The Integration of Personality*, Farrar and Rinehart, 1940). "The modern man has lost all the metaphysical certainties of his mediaeval brother, and set up in their place the ideals of material security, general welfare and humaneness." But even these ideals have been severely shaken (*Modern Man in Search of a Soul*, p. 235). Neuroses have become prevalent; and it has been discovered that they are to be influenced or cured, not mainly by dealing with the glandular secretions which are fundamental to psychological urges and instincts, but rather from the side of psychic activity. "For example, a suitable explanation or a comforting word to the patient may have something like a healing effect which may even influence the glandular secretions" (*Ibid.*, pp. 257, 258). But while keen interest has been awakened in the psychic life and psychotherapy, the theories and practices of Freud and Adler are too exclusively concerned with instinctive drives to satisfy the deeper spiritual needs of the patient. Their psychology "leaves out the psyche, and is suited to a people who believe they have no spiritual needs or aspirations. . . . They give too little value to fictional and imaginative processes . . . They do not give meaning enough to life. And it is only the meaningful that sets us free;" what is needed is "the healing fiction" (*Ibid.*, pp. 259, 260).

But who is to speak this word? The doctor is not required to have a finished outlook on life, and feels like handing his patient over to the clergyman, who as a rule lacks the special knowledge of psychic disorders which would lend to his words the weight of authority (*Ibid.*, pp. 260, 262). Most psychotherapists are disciples of Freud or of Adler, whose theories are hostile to spiritual values. Most patients are thus alienated from a spiritual standpoint, so that the wave of interest in psychology is accompanied by a general exodus from the Church (*Ibid.*, p. 263). And "side by side with the decline of the religious life, the neuroses grow noticeably more frequent" (*Ibid.*, p. 266). "Among all my patients in the second half of life—i.e., to say, over thirty-five—there has not been one," says Jung, "whose problem in the last resort was not that of finding a religious outlook on life. It is safe to say that every one of them fell ill because he had lost that which the living religions of every age have given to their followers, and none of them has been really healed who did not regain his religious outlook" (*Ibid.*, p. 264). "Religious problems which the patient brings before the psychotherapist [are] relevant to the neurosis and . . . possible causes of it" (*Ibid.*, p. 269); so that "it is high time for the clergyman and the psychotherapist to join forces to meet the great

spiritual task" of coping with "the urgent psychic needs of our age" (*Ibid.*, p. 265). But to patients suffering from a neurosis "because they could find no meaning in life or were torturing themselves with questions which neither present-day philosophy nor religion could answer," Jung confesses that he was forced to tell them that he, too, "had no answer to give" (*Ibid.*, p. 267). He who would heal the psychically ill must have the "attitude of unprejudiced objectivity" which comes from "deep respect for the facts and events and for the person who suffers from them," and "the truly religious person has this attitude" (*Ibid.*, pp. 270, 271; cf. pp. 276, 277, 278, 281, 282).

In his quite recent Terry Lectures on *Psychology and Religion* (Yale Univ. Press, 1938) and in his still more recent work, *The Integration of Personality* (1940), Dr. Jung comes, in his warm appreciation of the therapeutic value of religion, remarkably close to the line which divides his own alternately subjectivist and agnostic position from the common-sense religious realism of the *bona fide* religious believer. Religion, he points out, is "not caused by an arbitrary act of will," but is rather a "dynamic existence or effect," which "seizes and controls the human subject," "a careful and scrupulous observation of what Rudolf Otto aptly termed the 'numinosum,' " a condition "always and everywhere" explained by religious teaching as "due to a cause external to the individual," so that the term religion may be thought of as "the attitude peculiar to a consciousness which has been altered by the experience of the numinosum" (*Psychology and Religion*, pp. 4, 6). In the end, Jung, still entangled in the subjectivism of religious psychologism himself, strongly desiderates religious realism in his patients if he is to effect their cure. "The thing that cures a neurosis must be as convincing as the neurosis; and since the latter is only too real, the helpful experience must be of equal reality. It must be a very real illusion, if you want to put it pessimistically. But what is the difference between a real illusion and a healthy religious experience? It is merely a difference in words. . . . We must take [the ultimate things] as we experience them. And if such experience helps to make your life healthier, more beautiful, more complete and satisfactory to yourself and to those you love, you may safely say, 'This was the grace of God' " (*Ibid.*, p. 114).

As we propose to show in a later part of our present discussion, the therapeutic and dynamic religious realism which is apparently psychologically impossible for Jung himself, but which, fortunately, is psychologically possible to many another, may prove, on adequately critical grounds, to be theoretically permissible and even positively reasonable.

Mr. Everett Dean Martin has undertaken to explain "the mystery of religion" in a book which bears that title. *Assuming* that religion is not

what it purports to be, but rather "that something here is seeking at once to disguise and reveal itself," he sets himself the task of uncovering the "secret 'under-side' of religious phenomena" (*The Mystery of Religion*, Harpers, 1924, p. 4; cf. pp. 29, 30). What he promises is to let us know "what we and our fellow-beings are really doing when we think we are doing something different" (*Ibid.*, p. 5). "The older rationalist liberalism failed through want of psychological insight and sympathy," he thinks. "It sought to deny the mystery" of religion (*Ibid.*, p. 8). "What if religion were originally fabricated and its 'mysteries' cherished generation after generation to be an *escape from the very reality* into which modernism would fain now confine the objects of religious interest!" (*Ibid.*, p. 10). Mr. Martin has written vigorously, but with little originality. What he has done is to repeat the theories of Freud, Jung, Rank, Adler, Vaihinger, Brill, Havelock Ellis, Ames, Watson, and others, without too much anxiety as to whether their views are quite compatible with each other (See pp. 16, 26, 39, 44, 47-48, 55, 67, 68, 70, 80, 97, 101, 142, 145, 205, 241, 249, etc.).

Being very sure that "religion . . . is only incidentally a matter of opinion about subjects that might better be left to science" (*Ibid.*, p. 21), he suggests that "the whole language of religion may be pure symbolism—symbolism fabricated by the unconscious to express its wish fancies" (*Ibid.*, p. 26). All our thinking is symbolic, but symbols are of different sorts. We have two symbols of the United States, the map and the flag. Neither is the reality; the map is a utilitarian symbol, standing for directed thinking; the flag is an emotional symbol, standing for what lies wholly within experience (*Ibid.*, pp. 34-39). "Religious ideas are in a sense flags. It is often difficult for people to accept the fact that religious ideas are not maps" (*Ibid.*, p. 59). Religious thinking is like dream thinking, "All ideas, in so far as they have religious significance, are figures of speech" (*Ibid.*, p. 66). Mr. Martin here exaggerates the fact that religion makes use of symbols—a fact which no religious realist or theist need be concerned to deny—into something fundamentally different, namely, an essentially a-theistic religious psychologism, or subjective idealism. Knowing well that religious people commonly admit "that *many* of their ideas and practices are symbols" (*Ibid.*, p. 67), he maintains that it is a fact of which they are unaware, that "all ideas about Deity are symbols" (*Ibid.*, p. 116)—and symbols of something very different from what the religious person thinks they represent.

Mr. Martin's theory of religion leaves him pessimistic and cynical. "Men cannot stand this universe," he thinks, "without resorting to fictions" (*Ibid.*, p. 376). "Modern life is losing its spirituality and drifting toward chaos" (*Ibid.*, p. 383). The younger generation has become cynical (*Ibid.*, p. 349). Although "religion is primarily a mechanism of escape from the

real" (*Ibid.*, p. 343), although "religious feeling is a form of sexual activity" (*Ibid.*, p. 356), and although "religious ideas are fictions, the values of which consist wholly in the result of the behavior they start going" (*Ibid.*, p. 341), still "religion is an effort to give life a meaning" (*Ibid.*, p. 338), and "some factors of modernity . . . are bringing about a situation from which men are likely to seek refuge in religion" (*Ibid.*, p. 350). Evolutionism no longer seems to guarantee dreams of social advance (*Ibid.*, p. 366), and if men continue to find modern life more and more unsatisfactory, "a mass return to religion is likely" (*Ibid.*, p. 361). "Men want to believe that which will make them feel at home in the world, . . . which will bring them consolation and hope and will free them from the feeling of inferiority" (*Ibid.*, p. 346). "It is conceivable that there will be a mass revolt against our scientific culture . . . and that religion will be used as a weapon against those whose 'enlightened' teaching would rob the people of their consolations" (*Ibid.*, p. 370).

A revival of religion, then, is what Mr. Martin professes to expect, and to regard, as a social psychologist, "with serious misgivings." "Each great mass movement in religion has followed a wave of intellectual advance," he points out, citing as examples Christianity, the Reformation, Puritanism, and the evangelical revival (*Ibid.*, pp. 370-372, 375), (as if these were great disasters!). "A mass movement back to religion might easily fling modern civilization into another age of darkness (*Ibid.*, p. 375). It might give "mental mediocrity a social prestige which would keep it in a position of spiritual control for centuries" (*Ibid.*, p. 342).

As a general criticism of Mr. Martin's argument we would suggest that religion can scarcely be *fundamentally* so many diverse things as he says it is. If it is what Adler says it is, it is not what Freud or what Jung says it is, for these theories are mutually exclusive. It may include many such elements *incidentally*, provided it is fundamentally what it has always taken itself to be, namely, an adjustment to cosmic reality, and, at least in its highest forms, an attempt to bring human life into harmony with supreme values, on the assumption that this is of supreme concern to the Being of supreme power in the universe. Religion from this point of view is not a mechanism or escape *from* reality, but a means of escape *to* Reality, and not only is Mr. Martin not able to prove that this is not what religion is; he is not even able to deny that religion is an escape to Reality, without falling a prey to the pessimism and cynicism from which he sees that religion is the only escape. "The mystery of religion" is left by Mr. Martin mysterious still.

William Trotter's variety of religious psychologism furnishes us with another interesting example of a subjective philosophy of religion fallaciously based upon some rather shrewd psychological insights. There are

four instincts, according to Mr. Trotter, which bulk large in man's life: self-preservation, nutrition, sex, and gregariousness, or the instinct of the herd (*Instincts of the Herd in Peace and War*, Macmillan, 1916, p. 47). Suggestibility is an effect of gregariousness (*Ibid.*, p. 45); "the belief of affirmations sanctioned by the herd is a normal mechanism of the human mind" (*Ibid.*, p. 39), and "accumulated suggestions" have given "certain basal conceptions . . . the quality of instinctive truth" (*Ibid.*, p. 37). Moreover, the mind is so constituted that it readily "finds elaborately rationalized justifications . . . for assumptions forced on it by herd suggestion" (*Ibid.*). Thus, without having waited to be scientific, man comes not only to feel certain of many things, but also to think that his position is rational and its opposite irrational (*Ibid.*, pp. 36-37). Scientific suspense of judgment is difficult in matters which interest man. "He is too anxious to feel certain to have time to know." Consequently, "nowadays, matters of national defence, of politics, of religion, are still too important for knowledge, and remain subjects for certitude" (*Ibid.*, p. 35); and this certitude comes in normal fashion, as a result of suggestions on the part of the social group to which we belong. Religious ideas, then, cannot be expected to be valid as knowledge; their value is to be found rather in the social and racial safety they tend to bring about.

But religious ideas have not only acquired instinctive force from group suggestion. There is something in gregariousness itself, which makes for religion. "The individual of a gregarious species can never be truly independent and self-sufficient. Natural selection has ensured that as an individual he must have an abiding sense of incompleteness." In this way the desire for mystical union is accounted for, in Trotter's opinion (*Ibid.*, p. 50). Religion is like the dog's desire for the company of his master, like the wolf's desire for the pack, the sheep's desire for the flock (*Ibid.*, p. 51). This thought has been given striking expression by Professor Gilbert Murray:

"We are gregarious animals; our ancestors have been such for countless ages. We cannot help looking out on the world as gregarious animals do. . . . Students of animals under domestication have shown us how the habits of a gregarious creature, taken away from his kind, are shaped in a thousand details by reference to the lost pack which is no longer there. . . . It is a strange and touching thing, this eternal hunger of the gregarious animal for the herd friends who are not there. And it may be, it may very possibly be, that, in the matter of this Friend behind phenomena, our own yearning and our almost ineradicable conviction, since they are certainly not founded on either reason or observation, are in origin the groping of a lonely-souled



gregarious animal to find its herd or its herd-leader in the great spaces between the stars" (*The Stoic Philosophy*, p. 41 in reprint; quoted by M. C. Otto, *Things and Ideals*, Holt, 1924, p. 287; cf. pp. 248, 283 f., 286, 292, 317).

This psychological similarity, up to a certain point, between the yearning of the religious heart for fellowship with God and the loneliness of the gregarious individual when separated from the herd, cannot be denied. But the important question is not so much this of the subjective religious *want*, as it is whether the situation in which man finds himself is or is not such as to make clear his objective religious *need*, his need of reasonable assurance of a Reality great enough, favorable enough and accessible enough to enable man adequately to produce in a temporal, physical world and to conserve the absolutely valid spiritual values which he has learned to appreciate. And when what man really and objectively needs has been made to appear, the next question is whether it is at least permissible theoretically to believe that the religious Object man truly needs also really exists.

In the opinion of A. G. Tansley, "Trotter has shown in a perfectly convincing way that a large number of the non-rational beliefs of civilized men are directly traceable to the effect of herd-suggestion. . . . *Anything* may be believed provided it is suggested by the herd. When such beliefs appear to conflict with reason they are rationalized, in order that the harmony of the mind may not be disturbed" (*The New Psychology and Its Relation to Life*, Dodd, Mead, 1922 ed., pp. 222-223). "Rationalization may be defined as the production of a 'reason' for, as distinct from the true cause or motive of, an act or conation" (*Ibid.*, p. 182). "The rationalization may or may not be justified, but the existence of the beliefs themselves has nothing to do with objective truth—it is simply the result of the sensitiveness of the mind of the gregarious animal to herd suggestion" (*Ibid.*, p. 223).

What the "herd" suggests is often something in the realm of religion, and religion involves projection, which "consists in attributing parts of the mental content to outside entities" (*Ibid.*, p. 155). "In a primitive state of culture man projects parts of his own personality upon the forces of nature and thus personifies and often deifies them. He does not understand the nature of these forces, which sometimes work to his advantage, and sometimes to his disadvantage, and he attributes to them the only nature of which he has direct first-hand knowledge, the nature of the human will and the human passions. Thus he creates gods in his own image. A particularly strong power with an obvious individuality, which concerns most intimately his everyday life, is his tribe, and this he personifies as the tribal god, which he may project upon the image of an

idol or of an invisible spirit. . . . When his actions, prompted by egoistic impulses, which he may attribute to the influence of a demon or evil spirit, come into conflict with the commands of the tribal or herd god, he recognizes that he has 'sinned,' and accepts punishment as his due, because of his intense realization of the predominant claim of the herd" (*Ibid.*, pp. 157, 158).

Projection accounts not only for the existence of God (as the God-idea), according to Tansley, but for the character of God as well. "The projection of the most diverse human qualities upon God is well illustrated by the different aspects God takes according to human preoccupations. . . . In recent centuries, since Christianity became dominant, He is most universally the God of Love, because the oppressed majority must have consolation, and also because more and more the tender instinct is felt to be the hope of humanity" (*Ibid.*, p. 159). "So far God is essentially a social God, a concentrated projection of all the qualities useful to the herd in a supreme supernatural personality—the supreme herd leader of humanity, just as the old tribal gods were the tribal leaders. . . . Sometimes the God of the herd comes into sharp conflict with the God of the ethical self. . . . The individual mind, in accordance with its need of the greatest possible unification, ordinarily identifies its personal God with the social God, the God of the herd, but they can in truth only become completely identified when the herd has reached its highest state—the brotherhood of man—and the ethical self recognizes its obligation to serve the herd" (*Ibid.*, pp. 159, 160). "Projection seems to be as inevitable a function of the human mind as rationalization, and we cannot look forward to a time when either will fall into disuse" (*Ibid.*, p. 161).

There is much good psychology here, but it would be just as good psychology, or better, and would make for clearness and avoid begging the question in favor of subjectivism, if what is projected in religious thought were always spoken of as the God-idea, instead of as God. The projected God-idea is subjectively conditioned, without a doubt; but so are hypotheses in general. They are all expressive, more or less, of interest and of prepossessions in favor of certain cherished ends. But these projected ideas, religious or other, should be held subject to correction (or confirmation) in the light of further experience and further acquaintance with and appreciation of the values of human life. As Dean W. R. Matthews has pointed out in his little book, *God and the Modern Mind*, the important question for religion, and we may add, for philosophy, is not whether the God-idea is or is not projected, but whether, when it is projected, it *hits anything* of which it is an appropriate representation (*Op. cit.*, Doran, 1925, p. 90).

## Chapter VI

### PHILOSOPHICAL ANTECEDENTS OF HUMANISM

---

We now turn to a consideration of the recent development of a subjective, or psychological, idealism in religion as this has taken place in America, where it has taken on, for the most part, the rather characteristic form of a practical compromise known as religious humanism, or "religion without God."

Probably the most influential person in the development of anti-theistic humanism in twentieth-century America has been Dr. John Dewey. This is true in spite of the fact that until recently he had written little on the subject of religion, although he had said enough incidentally from time to time to make his general attitude tolerably clear. A few years ago, however, he dealt explicitly with religion in some communications to *The Christian Century*; his subscription to the "Humanist Manifesto," and his autobiographical sketch, "From Absolutism to Experimentalism" (*Contemporary American Philosophy*, Macmillan, 1930, Vol. II), threw considerable light on his religious position; and above all in his Terry Lectures entitled *A Common Faith* (Yale Univ. Press, 1934) we have what we may regard as his definitive statement on the subject.

He tells us that he was brought up in "a conventionally evangelical atmosphere of the more 'liberal' sort," and mentions "struggles that later arose between acceptance of that faith and the discarding of traditional and institutional creeds" (*Contemporary American Philosophy*, II, pp. 15-16). These struggles came, he informs us, not mainly from the effects of philosophical teaching—although he intimates that dissatisfaction with the argument of Butler's *Analogy* may have had something to do with making him "sceptical"—but rather from "personal experiences," with regard to the nature of which he does not further enlighten us, except to say, "The conflict of traditional religious beliefs with opinions that I could myself honestly entertain was the source of a trying personal crisis" (*Ibid.*, pp. 16, 19). In reply to one who interpreted these expressions as possibly referring to something unfortunate in his early religious history which had unduly influenced in an unfavorable way his later thinking about religion, Dr. Dewey replied that "nothing untoward happened,"

and that his "present attitude toward theology, various creeds and various philosophies of religion developed slowly" with the maturing of his own philosophical ideas (*The Christian Century*, Mar. 1, Mar. 22, 1933).

On the other hand, Dewey confesses that he has never attached "much importance to religion as a philosophical problem," having assumed that the religious tendencies of men may be safely left to "adapt themselves to any required intellectual change" (*Contemporary American Philosophy*, II, p. 20). This indifference to the philosophy of religion is rather surprising in one whose own philosophy makes so much of values for practical life. This is particularly true in view of his own admission that in the change to what he calls "the non-supernatural view" "there is undoubtedly loss of joy, of consolation, of some types of strength, and of some sources of inspiration," also "a manifest increase of uncertainty, . . . some paralysis of energy, and much excessive application of energy in materialistic directions" ("Religion and Our Schools," *Hibbert Journal*, VI, 1908, p. 799). One would have thought that so practically minded a philosopher as Dewey would have suspected, in view of such admitted facts, that the religious problem was one on which it might well be worth while from the first for the philosopher to exercise his intellectual powers.

Dewey's first philosophical thinking was in terms of the then regnant theological intuitionism, but this soon gave way before the neo-Hegelian influences which were at that time beginning to make themselves strongly felt in philosophical circles in America. It was about this time (1884) that Dewey expressed his religious views in these words: "God, as the perfect Personality or Will, is the only Reality, and the source of all activity. It is therefore the source of all activity of the individual personality. The Perfect Will is the motive, source and realization of the life of the individual. He has renounced his own particular life as an unreality; he has asserted that the sole reality is the Universal Will, and in that reality all his actions take place" (Quoted by G. H. Mead in his article, "The Philosophies of Royce, James and Dewey in their American Setting," *John Dewey, the Man and His Philosophy*, Harvard Univ. Press, 1930, p. 100). Two years later (1886), Dewey's *Psychology* appeared, containing such statements as that "the organic unity of the self and the world, of the ideal and the real, . . . is what we know as God"; that "every concrete act of knowledge involves an intuition of God, for it involves a unity of the real and the ideal, of the objective and the subjective" (*Ibid.*, pp. 244-245); and that in religious experience "identification of one's self with the completely realized personality, or God, occurs" (*Ibid.*, p. 338).

Gradually, however, Dewey "drifted away from Hegelianism" (*Contemporary American Philosophy*, II, p. 20). He had made the acquaintance of Comte in Harriet Martineau's exposition as far back as his undergraduate days, and was deeply impressed by the Comtean emphasis on

science as instrumental to social ends ("What Humanism Means to Me," *The Thinker*, Vol. II, No. 2, June, 1930, p. 10). In spite of the remark that he cannot remember that the law of "the three stages" [theological, metaphysical, and scientific or positive] affected him particularly, this early connection with Comte seems important; he acknowledges that "Comte was an important influence" (*Ibid.*, p. 3); and his own final position is not inaptly styled "neo-positivism." More than any other philosopher he may be regarded as the Comte of the twentieth century. Notwithstanding this finally very thoroughgoing break with Hegelianism, however, there remained in Dewey's thinking, as he himself recognizes, a permanent deposit due to his acquaintance with Hegel (*Contemporary American Philosophy*, II, p. 21), a lasting influence which it seems possible to trace in the tendency to obliterate any sharp distinction between subject and object, matter and spirit, divine and human (*Ibid.*, p. 19).

Important among the new influences was that of William James, especially his objective, biological treatment of psychological problems (*Ibid.*, pp. 23-25). Dewey's instrumentalism was also the outcome in large part of an attempt to find a common logic for science and morals (*Ibid.*, p. 23; cf. *Logical Conditions of a Scientific Treatment of Morality*, Univ. of Chicago Press, 1903; *The Influence of Darwin on Philosophy*, Holt, 1910, *passim*). As a result of this attempt he came to interpret science as essentially teleological, pragmatic, and did his best to make ethics nothing but a descriptive empirical science, with no ends but such as are essentially means to other ends, rather than finally valid in themselves.

If we would understand Dewey's philosophy as a whole, we must not, I think, ignore the influence of what, rather early in his philosophical career, came to be his settled attitude toward religion. For many years after his break with Hegelianism, his references to religion and theology were only incidental, but these incidental references were numerous and consistently negative. In his brief philosophical autobiography he refers to the fact that he has been "frequently criticized for undue reticence about the problems of religion (*Contemporary American Philosophy*, II, p. 20); but it was repeatedly made very plain in few words that he did not regard religion as a legitimate factor in human life, understanding by the term "religion" conscious dependence upon or any other definite relation to a superhuman personal or superpersonal power. Religion in any such sense was, in his opinion, essentially prescientific, a blank submission of the individual, under the compulsion of external authority, to the blank reality beyond—a surrender which was an excusable weakness when tools were rare and clumsy and when in general man's command of the methods that control action was precarious and disturbed (*The Influence of Darwin on Philosophy*, p. 266). Now, however, he explained, science is the recognized instrument for the maintenance even

of moral values, and as such it has fallen heir to the religious value formerly found in religious beliefs (*Ibid.*, pp. 298, 195). On one occasion he went so far as to declare that the one God is the whole, and that *true* religion is simply a sense of the whole. To worship gods (symbols of the whole) as if they were real things he stigmatized as idolatry (*Human Nature and Conduct*, Holt, 1922, pp. 330, 331). But even philosophy, according to Dewey, must surrender all pretension to be peculiarly concerned with ultimate reality, or with reality as a complete whole—with *the* real object (*Creative Intelligence*, Holt, 1917, p. 53). The significance of Darwinism for philosophy is found in its tendency to withdraw attention from such religio-philosophical questions as have to do with the origin, purpose and destiny of all things (*Influence of Darwin*, pp. 13, 15, 16, 19, 170). Philosophical defenses of God, freedom and immortality he does not regard as worthy of serious consideration (*Ibid.*, pp. 194, 180, 239). The attempt to substantiate a spiritual view of the universe is viewed as a mythologizing of reality, a survival of primitive animism (*Ibid.*, pp. 51, 54, 55, 111). All metaphysics, he maintains, is bound to decline and disappear, like the theology of which it is the last lingering shadow (*Ibid.*, pp. 45, 72, 128, 129, 201, 266, 303), leaving in its stead only "a purely positive science of phenomena" (*Ibid.*, p. 303) and "a catholic and far-sighted theory of the adjustment of the conflicting factors of life" (*Ibid.*, p. 45), or, more definitely and particularly, "[functional] psychology and social ethics, including . . . all the related concrete social sciences" (*Ibid.*, pp. 301, 261; cf. J. R. Angell, *The Relations of Psychology to Philosophy*, Univ. of Chicago Press, 1903). With Dewey's attitude toward epistemology we shall be concerned presently (Meanwhile, *v. op. cit.*, pp. 97, 98, 106, 172, 186, 189, 214).

Now Dewey's philosophy is, in one of its aspects, an illustration of his own principle of the pragmatic function of thought, and one of the practical motives underlying his whole emphasis and point of view has been the desire to liberate men from the religion of a transcendent and presumably absolute God, and even from what is left of Deity in such a "faded piece of metaphysical goods" as Spencer's Unknowable (*Ibid.*, p. 16), or in the pale abstractions of the absolutist philosophers. This is still evident in his recent detailed discussion of religion. Belief in the supernatural is particularly obnoxious, he feels, on practical grounds; it is pessimistic as to human powers and natural means, which, however limited, are real and available; its optimism is illusory, having built upon "the passive feeling that [in God, or the Absolute] the union of actual and ideal is already accomplished." Thus, whether in its theistic or its absolutistic form, "supernaturalism," defined not narrowly as belief in miracle, but broadly as belief in superhuman reality as a source of deliverance from evil, "stands in the way of an effective realization of

the sweep and depth of the implications of natural human relations." We must choose, Dewey is convinced, between "dependence upon the supernatural" and "the use of natural agencies" (*A Common Faith*, 1934, pp. 46, 52, 80, 81, 85; cf. pp. 22-24, 28, 33, 49).

Before proceeding further with the exposition of Dewey's pragmatic form of anti-theistic humanism and religious psychologism, I pause to comment upon this remarkable instance of what may be called the *fallacy* of "excluded middle," namely, the ignoring of the possibility that there may be a middle ground between dependence upon God without the use of natural agencies and, on the other hand, the use of natural agencies without dependence upon or any practical adjustment to any superhuman source of human insight or power. Even high Calvinists counselled the use of means, and it is a commonplace of presentday Christianity that while God works more effectively, other conditions being the same, through those who maintain a certain religious relationship than through others, much of God's most important work for man is through voluntarily cooperating human beings making natural agencies the instruments of their good will. John Dewey is so conspicuously Christian in his social ethics, so religious in the (limited) sense of being devoted to values which the present writer, along with many others, would call absolute and divine, even if Dr. Dewey himself would not, that it is a matter for wonder that in his third Terry Lecture he is betrayed into a strangely unhistorical depreciation of Christianity's contribution to social betterment, particularly in modern times (*Ibid.*, p. 69). His argument that faith in God means in its practical aspect an escape from social duty may apply, fairly enough, to quietistic mysticism and to a consistent absolutism in which the term "God" is sometimes used to signify an eternally complete, all-inclusive, ideal Reality; but no consistently Christian faith in God would hold that "the union of ideal and actual is already accomplished" except in the sense that God's *will* is always perfectly good; the realization of God's good will in the human character and in the social world is manifestly, from the Christian point of view, still very far from full realization. The present writer holds no brief for supernaturalism in any sense which would lead one to expect any arbitrary, order-upsetting, science-thwarting, miraculous intervention of God in the natural or the social world; but he would hold to the reality of the supernatural, if by that term is meant a really existent, superhuman Mind and Will, creatively involved in the emergence of higher novelty, there being included among the more important instances of the same the regenerative effect dependably experienced on condition of man's entering into and maintaining a certain describable religious relationship. Dr. Dewey's critical disparagement of this whole point of view (*Op. cit.*, pp. 11 ff) will demand our attention when we come to state and

defend our constructive position in religious epistemology (Part III *infra*. See especially p. 197).

We return to our exposition, in so far as it concerns our present purpose, of the main features of Dewey's philosophy. Having himself traversed the whole distance from the one (absolutistic) extreme of affirming that God as perfect Personality, or Will, is the only reality to the other (humanistic) extreme of a virtual denial that any superhuman being exists, Dewey felt the need of a philosophy which would enable him to get rid of philosophy, or rid, at any rate, of the old philosophical problems, most of which were implicitly at least, problems of the philosophy of religion. In particular, he would get rid of epistemology, because he would be rid of metaphysics, especially idealistic metaphysics; and this in turn, because he would hasten the final disappearance of theology and theistic religion, of which absolute idealism, or indeed all speculative idealism, was "the last lingering shadow." His ultimate aim has been that of positivism, to enlist science in the service of humanity; but his proximate aim has been to do what he says is "the chief task of those who call themselves philosophers," namely, "to help get rid of the useless lumber that blocks our highways of thought" (*Contemporary American Philosophy*, II, p. 26). This "useless lumber" is, obviously, epistemology and metaphysics (*Influence of Darwin on Philosophy*, 1910, pp. 45, 72, 97, 98, 106, 128, 129, 186, 189, 201, 214, 266, 303; *Creative Intelligence*, 1917, pp. 33, 35, 47, 61, 65, 66; *Reconstruction in Philosophy*, Holt, 1920, pp. 124, 126; *Experience and Nature*, Open Court, 1925, pp. 19, 21).

A little critical thought readily reveals the fact that what Professor Dewey does is to use one dubious pragmatic rationalization in order to get rid of another, in the practical purpose of which he has lost all interest. No longer interested in traditional religion, he turned against the "great tradition" (Urban's term) in philosophy, namely, idealism, which now seems to him essentially a pseudo-rationalization of religion, "a device for conserving 'the spiritual values of the universe' by devices of interpretation which converts the material and mechanical into mind" (*Experience and Nature*, p. 131). We may agree with Dewey that there was a good deal of false "rationalization" in the religiously motivated idealism of the Nineteenth Century; but it seems not unfair to ask with reference to Dewey's own characteristic philosophy, with its "immediate empiricism" and positivistic repudiation of metaphysics and (as we shall see) of epistemology, even as problems for philosophical consideration, whether this too may not be an instance of rationalization, whether true or false, of the desire to get rid of all theistic religion, because of abuses committed in the name of an unrealistic supernaturalism. This is especially evident at the point of the repudiation of epistemology, general as well as religious. Much is made of the development whereby "the



theological problem of attaining knowledge of God as ultimate reality was transformed in effect into the philosophical problem of the possibility of attaining knowledge of reality" (*Creative Intelligence*, p. 31). Now this turning from the practically significant and important problem of religious knowledge in particular to the less immediately practical problem of the possibility of knowledge in general is, for the theistic religionist, a natural and reasonable temporary digression; but to the non-theistic positivist it seems simply one further step in a false "rationalization" of an outworn superstition. But the question as to which rationalization is false and which is true is ultimately the question as to whether theistic religion or its positivistic contradictory is the truth. And for a reasonably critical consideration and probable solution of this problem it still seems to some of us, Mr. Dewey to the contrary notwithstanding, that a logical course to pursue, and one of the most promising, is that which will lead us along the road of general and religious epistemology.

We do not mean to imply that all the characteristic features of Dewey's philosophical system are simply the effect of his rejection of theistic religion as cause. What we would suggest is neither that nor the opposite theory of a one-way causal process—preferable, no doubt, from Dewey's own point of view—according to which philosophical positions have been all-determining and the religious position purely an effect. Rather is it to be supposed that there has been causal influence in both directions, from religion to philosophy and from philosophy to religion. But our suspicions are aroused as to the complete disinterestedness and objectivity of the philosophy which is set forth as leading to results so negative for religion; consequently we turn to the question of the independent validity of his philosophy in general, and particularly of his philosophical repudiation of what philosophy has mainly been throughout its history, namely, metaphysics and epistemology. We begin with a consideration of his close association of the epistemological problem with philosophical idealism.

All modern idealisms, Dewey charges, "have sought by examination of the structure of the knowing function (psychological structure in the subjective idealisms and logical structure in the objective idealisms, and usually with a union of both strains) to show that no matter what the detailed conclusions of the special sciences, the ideal authority of truth, goodness and beauty are secure possessions of ultimate Being, independently of experience and human action" (*The Quest for Certainty*, Minton, Balch, 1929, pp. 63-64), "that the perfect is already and immutably in Being," "that the ideal is once for all the real" (*Ibid.*, pp. 302, 310; cf. p. 34). This idealistic "equation of the real and the known" (*Ibid.*, p. 294) is the result, it is pointed out, of taking ideas as statements of what is or has been (*Ibid.*, p. 138), instead of as plans of action and

anticipations of future experience (*Ibid.*, pp. 166-167). Professor Dewey himself holds that thought guiding action takes part in the reconstruction of objects, but he insists that it is a mistake to suppose, as idealism does, that thought, as such, not only reconstructs the object but constructs it in the first place (*Experience and Nature*, p. 158). That things are what they are *known* as, and nothing but that, he regards as the fallacious root of all the idealisms ("The Postulate of Immediate Empiricism," *Journal of Philosophy*, July, 1905; republished in *The Influence of Darwin*, pp. 227-228).

There may be much truth in these criticisms of the traditional idealisms; but when the critic goes on to say that to take perception as "a case of knowledge or of presentation to a mind or knower is to let the nose of the idealist camel into the tent" (*Journal of Philosophy*, Vol. VIII, 1911, p. 396), we are inclined to demur. To what he calls the "spectator, searchlight notion of consciousness" (*Experience and Nature*, p. 310), according to which the knower is set over against the known, knowing consists in "surveying the world, looking at it, getting the view of a spectator," and knowledge is a transcript, more or less accurate, of the nature of real things (*Creative Intelligence*, p. 31; cf. pp. 58-59; *The Influence of Darwin*, p. 172), Dewey objects that it is an artificial view, "modeled after what was supposed to take place in the act of vision" (*The Quest for Certainty*, p. 23). "Taking what is already known or pointing to it is no more a case of knowledge," he claims, "than taking a chisel out of a tool box is the making of the tool" (*Ibid.*, p. 188; "Does Reality Possess Practical Character?" *Essays Philosophical and Psychological in Honor of William James*, Longmans, Green, 1908, pp. 66-67). Dewey even denies that knowledge is awareness of what exists independently (*The Quest for Certainty*, p. 22). He is only being consistent then in rejecting the realist doctrine, according to which consciousness is like the eye running over a field of ready-made objects, or a light illuminating now this and now that portion of a given field (*Experience and Nature*, p. 308).

In opposition to this "spectator-notion" of knowledge, Dewey insists that knowledge is not a mystery, but a biological fact, and sets up knowing as "a natural function or event," "something that happens to things in the course of their career" (*Journal of Philosophy*, VIII, 1911, p. 554; cf. "The Experimental Theory of Knowledge," *Mind*, July, 1906, reprinted with changes in *The Influence of Darwin*, pp. 97, 98, 106, 186, 189, 214). It is "a taking and using of meanings," "use made of experienced natural events," "the directive presence of future possibilities in dealing with existent conditions" (*Experience and Nature*, p. 332; *Creative Intelligence*, pp. 47, 59; cf. pp. 33, 61; *Essays in Experimental Logic*, p. 15; "Philosophy" in Beard's *Whither Mankind?* p. 320, Longmans, Green, 1928; *Essays . . . in Honor of William James*, 1908, p. 67). Now it may

be true enough that "the organic instruments of the whole intellectual life . . . have developed on a definitely practical basis and for practical aims" (*Influence of Darwin*, p. 189), and that it is commonly by manipulation (if not by manipulation only, as Dewey asserts) that we learn the properties of things (*Reconstruction in Philosophy*, pp. 115, 116); but this is but one aspect of the knowing process. It is the external, behavioristic, motor view of consciousness and knowing, and by no means excludes the truth of the other similarly incomplete and one-sided internal spectator-view, according to which the known object is presented in the unique relation of awareness by, or givenness to, a conscious subject. Dewey's keen intellect moves, pendulum-like, from one term of the antithesis to the other, often ignoring possibilities of synthesizing the essentials of the view he is criticizing with all that is valid in the position he would establish in its stead. He is quite emphatic in choosing one side of the antithesis, not only as against the other side but as against any synthesis of the two. "Thinking does not mean any transcendent states or acts suddenly introduced into a primarily natural scene,"—this is his question-begging way of putting the case—"the operations of knowing are natural responses of the organism." "Instrumentalism means a behaviorist theory of thinking and knowing. It means that knowing is literally something which we do" (*Essays in Experimental Logic*, Univ. of Chicago Press, 1916, pp. 331, 332).

Now we would readily admit that, externally observed, the behavioristic, motor theory of knowing is valid: knowing is an event in the history of the psycho-physical organism in relation to its environment. But this does not keep it from being at the same time what introspection finds it to be, namely, a contemplation of the object with its significant characters. Dewey admits that contemplation has a place in the whole relationship of the object to the subject, but claims that whenever contemplation is ultimate instead of action, the experience is purely aesthetic, not cognitive. This seems to be a misreading of experience in the interest of a theory. There seems to be nothing to prevent an experience being both aesthetic (contemplative) and cognitive at the same time. What indeed is contemplation but an emotionally colored continuation of the cognitive moment? And why should not the practical effects of cognition be distinguished from cognition proper, instead of being not only included within it, but even made so central and exclusive as practically to crowd out of the definition of knowing all elements of mental contemplation?

We recognize, with Professor Dewey, that the most immediately practical problems of knowledge are the scientific, not the epistemological. Truly enough too, "at the time when science was advancing at an unprecedented rate, philosophers were asking whether knowledge was possible" (*Whither Mankind?* p. 320). But the piecemeal, scientific problem

is not the only problem of knowledge, nor the only one that is of practical importance, particularly in the religious realm. There may have been confused and futile ways of stating the epistemological problem, but that is not to say that the problem is trivial or unreal. "How a separate subject can know an independent object" (*Reconstruction in Philosophy*, p. 124) is a real problem, and not to recognize it is to hide one's head, ostrich-like, in the sand, saying, "The epistemological problem is *what it is now being experienced as*, namely, nothing."

That was an interesting but ambiguous device of Dewey's, which he called "the postulate of immediate empiricism," the postulate, namely, that "things are what they are experienced as" (*Journal of Philosophy*, Vol. II, July, 1905, pp. 393-399; *Influence of Darwin*, pp. 226-241). As a methodological principle it is the fundamental principle of scientific method, and as such is innocuous enough and obviously valid. "If you wish to find out what . . . any philosophic term . . . means, go to experience and see what it is experienced as" (*Influence of Darwin*, p. 239; cf. *Essays in Experimental Logic*, p. 69). But the significance of this immediate empiricism for philosophy depends upon the further use that is to be made of it, and especially whether a surreptitious metaphysical use is to be made of it, by way of a fallacious simple obversion. "The real significance of the principle," professes its proponent, "is that of a method of philosophical analysis—a method identical in kind . . . with that of the scientist." From it "nothing can be deduced, not a single philosophical proposition" (*Influence of Darwin*, pp. 238, 239). This seems harmless enough; but immediately thereafter, in a footnote, there occurs this significant admission: "Excepting of course, some negative ones. One could say that certain views are certainly *not* true, because, by hypothesis, they refer to non-entities, that is, non-empiricals" (*Ibid.*, p. 238). Here the innocuous looking, useful staff is magically transformed into a subtly moving serpent. The supposedly innocent principle of scientific methodology becomes a negative metaphysical principle with pretensions logically suggesting claims to omniscience, according to which beings, or at least some being or beings, not experienced by us human beings or not experienced by some of us, are to be declared *not* to exist, or *not* to be in reality what they are not experienced by us, or by some of us, to be. For non-omniscient, non-omnipotent human beings with their narrowly limited perceptual experience it is illogical, under ordinary or undefined conditions, to reason from non-experience of entities to their non-existence. Experience of a thing is notoriously better evidence of its existence than lack of experience of it is evidence of its non-existence.

If the question be asked whether Dr. Dewey ever uses his postulate to over-ride strict logical procedure in the interest of some philosophical prepossession, the answer must be, I think, that apparently he has some-

times done so. It would seem that the postulate of immediate empiricism, in the negative application of it which he sanctions, is the abstract generalized expression of the procedure he actually employs in ruling out as "non-empirical" not only such ideas as those of a transcendent God and a future life for man but even that of a persistent metaphysical ego as the individual subject of experience. As ordinary psychological idealism applies the principle of immediate empiricism in its negative form to the physical object, saying that physical things are not what they are not experienced as, and that they are non-existent when they are not experienced, so Dewey maintains that the experiencing subject exists only when it is consciously experienced as such. This the following quotations, selected from many possible ones, assert or imply: "The psychologist brings states of consciousness into existence" (*The University Chronicle*, August, 1899; *The Influence of Darwin*, p. 248; cf. G. H. Mead, *The Definition of the Psychical*, Univ. of Chicago Press, 1903). "There is no evidence of the existence of a knower and of its relation to the seen light" (*Essays in Experimental Logic*, p. 263). No place is found for the "conception once universally entertained" that "experience centers in, or gathers about, or proceeds from a center or subject which is outside the course of natural existence and set over against it, . . . whether this antithetical subject is termed soul, or spirit, or mind, or ego, or consciousness, or just knower or knowing subject" (*Creative Intelligence*, p. 30).

From this point of view reality is just experience, without being necessarily anyone's experience. With the disappearance of the knowing subject, save as a temporary or intermittent functional distinction within the whole of "experience," the epistemological problem of how the inner experience of the subject can give valid knowledge of the independently existing object also disappears. It is for this, no doubt, that the principle is chiefly appreciated by its proponent. He is very jealous with respect to this precious device. This is evident from the irritation with which he rejects as "absurd" the position of those who ask, when the term "experience" is used in philosophical discourse, "Whose experience?" (*Experience and Nature*, p. 231). But is the question so very absurd? Is it not a fact that we are often able to recall experiences in which we were not explicitly conscious of ourselves at the time of the original experience? How could I recall an experience as *my* past experience, if the experience was not mine in the past, in spite of the fact that I was not at the time thinking of the experience as being mine? The same subject, self-identical in the midst of changing contents, was there in the past, having the perceptual experience, and is here in the present, recalling in memory that past experience, even though in the past experience only the objective

content and not the perceiving subject was explicitly presented in consciousness.

Dewey's immediate empiricism is identified by him with naive realism, and it is indeed largely true that the determination to have nothing to do with epistemology does mean a return to the backward condition of the naive mind, so far as this problem is concerned. But Dewey's "naive realism" is a very sophisticated naive realism, if truth be told. Originally it was a psychological idealism, so disguised by being applied to the subject as well as to the object as to seem to be not idealism but the "uncorrupted realism" (*Creative Intelligence*, p. 55) of the "plain man," who regards noises heard and lights seen as "just things," and not as related to mind. Dewey does not shrink from declaring that the plain man's "attitude to these things as things involves their not being in relation to a mind or knower." "Once depart from this thorough naiveté," he warns, "and the first step is taken in the road which ends in an idealistic system" (*Journal of Philosophy*, VIII, 1911, p. 397).

In his reply to Lovejoy's contribution to *Essays in Critical Realism*, Dewey contends that his position is neither epistemological monism nor epistemological dualism, but "realism without monism or dualism" (*Journal of Philosophy*, XIX, 1922, pp. 309 ff., 351 ff.). Things are first of all "present in experience on their own account, or noncognitively; then they may become implicated in a reflective inquiry. . . . When it is asserted that they mean or support a certain conclusion, they acquire a representative capacity which they did not inherently possess. . . . Wherever inference or reflection comes in . . . there is . . . mediation of an object by some other entity which points to or signifies or represents. . . . Nevertheless, thought or inference becomes knowledge in the complete sense of the word only when the indication or signifying is borne out, verified in something directly present, or immediately *experienced*—not immediately known. . . . The test is found in what is finally immediately present, which has a meaning because of prior mediation which it would not otherwise have." Thus Mr. Dewey denies that he is a monistic realist because there is a duality between the present thing which symbolizes and the future or to-be-experienced thing which is symbolized or meant, and because when the future thing comes to be present it is not immediately *known*, since knowing is now in the past; it is immediately experienced and so no longer needs to be known, but only to be acted upon (*Journal of Philosophy*, XIX, 1922, pp. 352-358). On the other hand, his position is not epistemological dualism, he maintains, since there is no transcendent double behind the object of immediate experience when it is being experienced.

Just what kind of realism is this naive realism of Dewey's, which claims to be neither monistic nor dualistic, neither presentational nor represen-

tational? It is true that the realistic emphasis in Dewey's books and articles kept growing gradually in the years after he left George H. Mead and his other Chicago colleagues and joined the realistically inclined philosophical Faculty of Columbia University. In republishing in 1916 his essays from *Studies in Logical Theory* (Chicago, 1903) he acknowledged as much: "I have learned much from the realistic movement about the full force of the position sketched in the essays when adequately developed; and . . . later discussions have made it clear that the language employed in the essays was sometimes unnecessarily (though naturally) infected by the subjectivism of the positions against which it was directed" (*Essays in Experimental Logic*, p. 26). Still, in spite of his verbal acceptance of "naive realism," Dewey can hardly be accepted as a *bona fide* realist. He is unwilling to accept those "realistic doctrines [which] reduce knowledge to awareness of what exists independently" (*The Quest for Certainty*, p. 22; cf. *Experience and Nature*, p. 308). "Existence antecedent to search and discovery" is admitted (Cf. *Creative Intelligence*, pp. 7, 25; *Essays in Experimental Logic*, p. 35), "but it is denied that as such . . . it is already the object of knowledge" (*Experience and Nature*, p. 156). Objection is made to the "rupture of continuity which analytic realism would maintain: that between the world and the knower as something outside of it, engaged in an otiose contemplative survey of it" (*Essays in Experimental Logic*, pp. 72, 73). To treat the object of science "as a complete and self-sufficient object" is "to burden ourselves with an unnecessary and insoluble problem" (*Experience and Nature*, p. 139).

Here we have the secret of Dewey's unwillingness to become an out-and-out realist. He could not on that basis have found any solution of the epistemological problem, but would have had to adopt a thoroughgoing agnosticism, a conclusion which would have offended his common sense while conflicting with the fact of the ever-expanding body of presumably valid scientific knowledge. And so, being unwilling to adopt any position on the central problem of epistemology, either a frank idealism on the one hand, with its dilemma of subjectivism or absolutism, or a thoroughgoing realism on the other hand, he denies the validity of epistemology and occupies an ambiguous no-man's-land in which reality is experience not experienced for the most part by any subject. Such "experience," even though it be asserted that it "denotes primarily a mode of existence" (*Journal of Philosophy*, VI, 1909, p. 19), has all the marks of a substantiated abstraction. If it be charged against any non-dualistic, non-agnostic realism that it is necessarily involved in a similar ambiguity and difficulty, it may be replied that this is a misinterpretation of the situation. When we want to say what any independently existing reality looks like, we must, of course, limit ourselves to saying what it would and does look like when looked at under specific conditions. But this does not necessarily

mean that we can say nothing about what it is when not looked at or in any other way immediately experienced by human beings. Causal judgments, for instance, can often be made with reference to events which, without being directly experienced by man, have intervened between an observed cause and an observed effect.

It may be doubted whether Dr. Dewey has ever gotten away from the more or less disguised psychological idealism of his Chicago period. His concept of "experience" which is nobody's conscious experience looks very much like what would result, as we have already suggested, from applying the idealistic interpretation to the perceiving subject as well as to the perceived object. This would mean that the subject exists only in the subjective phase of consciousness; it exists only when it is object of self-consciousness, and is only what it is consciously experienced as, not what it is not experienced as. Furthermore, from this point of view objects of experience, real objects, break down, when the situation becomes problematic, into modifications of the subject (sensations and ideas, trial-predicates), and out of these subjective contents objects can be reconstituted through judgment and verification. It is hard to pin such a position down to either a *bona fide* idealism or a genuine realism, either dualistic epistemologically or monistic. Obviously, from this point of view, God as Object might be regarded as the construct of religious judgment out of subjective elements of conscious experience. This would be subjective or psychological idealism in religion.

But there is a fallacious analysis throughout this whole procedure. It is not the object, at least in its primary qualities, which judgment reconstructs, nor even its secondary or sense-qualities, but what we may call its tertiary qualities, those which depend for their being upon their being thought. The most that can be said is that the object-as-perceived-and-thought-about is reconstructed to some extent through judgment; but all that is really reconstructed is the idea-element. The independently existing core of the total object is beyond the power of mere thought to modify. Our perceptual cognition, as Professor Dawes Hicks has insisted (*Contemporary British Philosophy*, edited by Muirhead, Vol. I, pp. 118-128), is not a constructing of the object, but "an act of discriminating." We construct and reconstruct our *ideas* of things in the light of experience, and our God-*idea* in the light of religious experience. These ideas, including the God-idea, we use as guides to adjustment and action in relation to the objects of which they are our ideas. But this common-sense realism seems not to satisfy instrumentalists and philosophers of pure experience of the school of Mead and Dewey.

Unable to carry through the notion of concrete content of experience or knowable reality in complete isolation from experience and experiencers, but fearing and disliking the idealistic conclusion which seemed



inescapable if the content of experience were made dependent upon a *conscious* experiencing subject, Dewey was led to adopt the desperate expedient of interpreting experience and its subject in terms of biology rather than of introspective psychology. From this point of view "experiencing means living," "trying and undergoing" (*Creative Intelligence*, p. 8; *Democracy and Education*, Macmillan, 1916, pp. 163, 164; cf. *Contemporary American Philosophy*, II, p. 24). It is in connection with perception, perhaps, that Dewey's non-psychological view of experience comes to its most characteristic and yet paradoxical expression. He is very self-conscious about what he is doing—he knows he is using a desperate device in order to get rid of the (to him) insoluble epistemological problem. The thought "that sensations-perceptions are cases of knowledge" he dismisses as an "ingrained superstition, growing up in a false physics and physiology, and perpetuated by psychology." "But—*crede experto*," he goes on, "—let [the realists] try the experiment of conceiving perceptions as pure natural events, not as cases of awareness of apprehension, and they will be surprised to see how little they miss—save the burden of carrying traditional problems" (*Essays in Experimental Logic*, p. 262). Perceptions are not "cases of knowledge," he claims, but "simply natural events having in themselves (apart from a *use* that may be made of them) no more knowledge status or worth than, say, a shower or a fever" (*Ibid.*, pp. 252-254). "Seen" involves a relation to an organic activity, not to a knower or mind" (*Journal of Philosophy*, VIII, 1911, p. 396). The pragmatic motive underlying this strange philosophical "rationalization" is found in the (mistaken) conviction that "if 'perceptions' are regarded as cases of knowledge, the gate is opened to the idealistic interpretation" (*Essays in Experimental Logic*, p. 254). Our contention, on the contrary, will be that perceptions can be consistently regarded as instances of knowledge without forsaking a critical monistic realism (Cf. Chs. I, XI; also *The Problem of Knowledge*, Ch. XIV; *Religious Realism*, pp. 361-374).

To sharpen the contrast between Dewey's position and one which we take to be less ambiguous, more self-consistent, and more in accord with common sense, as well as better fitted to conserve religious values than either his position or that of the subjective idealism which he so obviously fears and is so hard put to it to avoid, I must refer to what for nearly a generation now, following a famous article by Professor R. B. Perry, has been called "the egocentric predicament" (*Journal of Philosophy*, VII, 1910, p. 5). By the egocentric predicament is meant the really trivial but possibly somewhat disconcerting fact that we can never perceive any object except a perceived object, nor remember anything except something remembered, nor consciously experience or think of anything except something consciously experienced or thought of. In other words, all experience is egocentric, related to the experiencing subject. Now of

course it would be passing strange if this were not so; but an artificial greatness has been thrust upon this so-called predicament by the use which is very commonly made of it as a (supposed) proof of psychological idealism. All experience is of reality related to a conscious self as object or content of consciousness; wherefore, it is argued, generalizing from universal human experience, the only reasonable conclusion is that all reality is object or content of conscious experience, necessarily depending upon such experience for its existence, as idealism maintains. Now the trouble with this supposed demonstration of the necessary truth of idealism is that even if realism were true, the egocentric predicament would obviously still obtain. So then, the egocentric predicament, being a necessary fact regardless of whether idealism or realism be true, cannot be made a proof of either the one or the other. But whereas, as we have pointed out, the egocentric predicament is a universal fact of experience, but does not prove idealism, Dr. Dewey, not having found a genuinely realistic and non-agnostic solution of the problem of knowledge, and imagining that if the egocentric predicament were true of all experience it would mean the truth of idealism, is led, in order to avoid such a catastrophe, to deny the universality of the egocentric predicament. This he accomplishes at the cost of denying that all experience is conscious experience, experience which a conscious subject has. From this point of view it is comparatively easy to go on to deny that ordinary perceptual experience is an instance of knowledge (*Essays in Experimental Logic*, pp. 262-263, 267).

From Dewey's point of view even recognition must be interpreted, in defiance of etymology, as non-cognitive. "Recognition is a nod, either of voluntary piety or of coerced respect, not a knowing" (*Experience and Nature*, p. 328). Here Dewey seems to have been influenced by a study of animal behavior, in which, perforce, perception and recognition are interpreted from the outside, not from within. A dog, when he is sleepy, goes to the kennel, and, when hungry, is excited by the smell and color of meat, but it is questionable, Dewey thinks, in what sense he sees an object (*How We Think*, Heath, 1910, p. 17). "Animals learn (when they learn at all) . . . by doing at random first one thing and another thing and then preserving the things that happen to succeed" (*Ibid.*, pp. 109-110). This doctrine which Dewey shares with Thorndike and J. B. Watson, has been seriously discredited, however, by the *Gestalt* psychology (See W. Köhler, *The Mentality of Apes*, Harcourt, Brace, 1926; K. Koffka, *The Growth of the Mind*, *ibid.*, 1925; and *Principles of Gestalt Psychology*, *ibid.*, 1935).

It would be possible to continue further with the exposition and criticism of Dewey's philosophy (For some other criticisms see W. T. Feldman, *The Philosophy of John Dewey: A Critical Analysis*, Johns Hopkins Press, 1934, and the still unpublished dissertation of E. T. Adams, *The Epis-*

*temology of John Dewey*, in the Yale University Library, deposited there in 1934); but enough has been set down, if we are not mistaken, to show that that philosophy, viewed as a "rationalization" of the rejection of the theistic type of religion, and carrying with it a repudiation of the characteristic traditional problems of metaphysics and epistemology, is very far from being a proof or even a reasonable justification of his religious position. Like all other forms of the "philosophy of pure experience," Dewey's "immediate empiricism" is a more or less consciously disguised after-effect of an originally fallacious analysis of conscious experience. The universal *relatedness* of the objects to consciousness or the subject was taken to involve universal *dependence* of the object upon the subject—a very natural fallacy when consciousness is imagined to be an *area*, instead of being, as awareness, a unique *relation* between a subject and its objects. The unsatisfactoriness of subjectivism, both practically and theoretically, instead of leading to a retracing of steps and correction of the original fallacious psychologism, has driven many to the so-called "radical empiricism" in which the dependence of the object upon the conscious subject is obscured, as we have seen, by the psychological idealism being applied to the subject as well as to the object of consciousness. The subject being held to exist only when it is indisputably present as object of self-consciousness, most experience is left, presumably, without any subject for its object to depend upon. It can then be called "experience," even while it is denied that it is anyone's experience. The object can be said to be independent of the subject, although still simply what it is experienced as. The question, Experienced by whom? must not be asked. Reality is experience; there is nothing more to be said. From this point of view God as *reality* is simply some content of experience in which religious interest is taken, not anything real beyond the bounds of human experience. As identified with the God-idea, God is simply an instrument of thought, constructed in order to deal with experienced objects of religious interest, and true only in the pragmatic sense of working satisfactorily, not in the sense of corresponding to any transcendent independently existing reality. But as Dewey clearly recognizes (*A Common Faith, passim*), this is not, either as reality or as idea, the God of any historic *religion*. Some such religious position may be the best that is consistently possible for one who has never corrected the original blunder of adopting a psychological idealism. But for one who has escaped that fatal mistake, that there is an independently existing Divine Reality of which we may gain some knowledge through direct experiential dealings, still remains an open possibility.

We can agree with Dewey that "the demand of righteousness for reverence does not depend upon ability to prove the existence of an antecedent Being who is righteous" (*The Quest for Certainty*, p. 304); but this

is not to deny that, for him who reveres righteousness, the question as to whether or not there has existed "from the beginning" a Being of supreme righteousness is a question of crucial importance. On Dewey's own admission the theistic outlook makes a difference for the better in "some types of strength" and "some sources of inspiration," and consequently, we may point out, in man's capacity for and motivation toward the more effective promotion of righteousness and other spiritual values.

## Chapter VII

### THEOLOGICAL ANTECEDENTS OF HUMANISM

---

Most interesting in connection with psychological idealism in religion, and of fundamental importance in relation to the development of "religious humanism" in America, is the history of the religious thinking of the late George Burman Foster, of the University of Chicago. From the notes of his lectures on Christian Dogmatics it is evident that in 1905, while continuing to affirm the objective validity of the Christian faith in God, he had begun to raise seriously the question as to what was to be the effect upon theology and religion of the pragmatist or instrumentalist doctrine, which he interpreted as meaning that ideas and truth have a subjective, functional significance only, and are not to be taken as valid representations of objective reality in any metaphysical sense. In the dictated portions of these lectures, prepared before the year 1905, the insistence upon the objective validity of the religious consciousness, the reality of the supramundane object of religious dependence, is very emphatic, as the following quotations will show:

"Religion is man's seeking communion with a supramundane power or powers, which lay claim to him and determine his life. . . . This seeking has its roots in the worth-preserving heart and in the desire for blessedness on the part of man, and it is evoked by impressions due to disclosures of that power in the real world." "In the religious life everything depends upon the practical question of our blessedness, our salvation in some sense of the word, and therefore upon the reality of the supramundane power or powers of which we form ideas. . . . Religion would put human life into relation with a supramundane reality." "The religious life . . . is swayed and governed in its entire course by the certainty of a supramundane power on which we, together with the world, are totally dependent. To be sure, the believer is able to represent this power only with the aid of fantasy. But the believer lives at the same time in the firm conviction that that which is thus represented is *reality*." "All

religious cognition terminates in value judgments, . . . only the concept 'value-judgment' is not to be opposed to the concept 'existence-judgment.' Rather is it essential to a judgment of faith to affirm a reality" (*Christianity in Its Modern Expression*, Macmillan, 1921, §§ 10:2; 9:2, 5; 6:1; 8:2).

But in the notes of Professor Foster's extemporaneous remarks in this course as it was delivered in the early months of 1905 we find evidence of a growing problem as to the bearing of instrumentalism upon Christian apologetics in general, and upon the Christian faith in God in particular. The following quotations are in chronological order:

"Whether or not Christian faith is right in its doctrines of God, the world, man and salvation, is not quite the business of dogmatics. That is the work of apologetics. Whether it is reality or illusion is not the question—though faith affirms the reality, and I do not see how faith could survive if the ideas were to be regarded as illusion." "There is a certain function which illusion often has in experience, but if the believer should come permanently to the conviction that all the characteristic ideas of religion are illusion, the result would be fatal for his religion. Cancel the idea-element in faith and you destroy the faith." "God is felt to have authority. The authority-feeling is psychologically generated, of course; but is the authority of no objective validity? Theoretically we must consider the contention that we cannot tell whether the gods are mere *Wünschwesen* or not. But practically it is quite different. The only way one has religious assurance is practically. And while we may not be able to prove or disprove the objective validity of the belief in the authority of God on speculative grounds, practically one may become assured of it. . . . It is when practical religion weakens that the question seriously arises as to whether the gods are 'wish-beings' or not." "By no definitive scientific proof can you compel a man to hold that God exists. . . . The remedy for doubt and fear of subjective illusion is mainly practical; it is to live deeply and fully on one's religious possessions and in the experiencing of their values" (*Ibid.*, §§ 1:1, note 2; 6:1, note 2; 7:2, notes 1, 2; 9:2, note 2).

"History ought to be worth something to us. In the entire history of religion there has been present without exception a power outside of the human power, which is best designated therefore by the word 'supramundane'—a power or powers or being in which man has believed. This is an inalienable feature of religion, high and low, at home and abroad, millennium

after millennium." "If we strip off the attribute of personality from God, we have not much left. If we say God's personality is like ours, we are picturing God to ourselves by means of a symbol which is doubtless inadequate, but not necessarily erroneous. If we say God's personality is not like ours, we land in agnosticism. If God is personal, and personality is what we find in man, is not God also more than that? The trouble here is that we cannot put any content into the notion of 'super-personality,' except a sub-personal content. It is our right to use the highest category we have to set forth God, and that highest category is personality. And as for the modern cutting out of the God-idea, it is so radical and so foreign to the Christian religion that I do not recognize it" (*Ibid.*, § 9:5, note 2).

"Would it not be a more adequate God-faith to hold that reality is originally and structurally good throughout, even if we had to give up the questions as to personality, trinity in unity, etc., than to hold to the old doctrine of an absentee good Being, with a cosmos which was not originally or structurally good? Is that what people mean when they say that the God-idea is passing away?" (*Ibid.*, § 11:3, note 1).

"The truth of religion is wrapped up with the question regarding the revelation-idea of religion. Religiosity is psychological and indubitable. But the revelation-idea is a presupposition to account for this religiosity from the standpoint of religion. But this is not a psychological or historical, but a metaphysical question. Is religion true? Psychology cannot say. Dogmatics cannot escape philosophy, the Ritschlians to the contrary notwithstanding" (*Ibid.*, § 11:5, note 1).

"The essential thing in the Christian faith in Jesus is that God is as good as Jesus is, even though appearances may sometimes be to the contrary. If we can stick to this in all the grind and torture and darkness of this world, we can live in hope and die without despair. If the will at the heart of things is, in its attitude toward us, as good as the will of Jesus, I can bury my child, I can pass through invalidism, lose my fortune, be maligned, and die forgotten before I die; I can assume too that the divine attitude toward me in my guilt will be one of mercy. If God is truly represented by the will of Jesus made omnipotent, what need I fear? If we depart from this, we depart from the Christian religion" (*Ibid.*, § 14:1, note 2).

"Apologetics is in a state of flux today, and I hesitate to do anything with it any more, and reserve the right to change all this, if I have to do so [referring to the discussion of the truth of

the Christian religion]. But I am still inclined to think that, much as our thinking is being colored by pragmatism and the activity-philosophy, the main contention of our apologetics abides" (*Ibid.*, note after § 14).

"Will the conviction suffice for religion that the structure and function of the universe are such as render the production of values possible? Is this what 'God' symbolizes?" (*Ibid.*, § 30:1, note 3).

"The conceptual machinery of the Biblical writers had a functional reality to them; are you on that account going to give to these concepts an ontological reality? Is the form of culture of a particular time to be erected into eternal validity?" "After Jesus, it is his God—i.e., essentially—or none. . . . Perhaps not speculatively and ontologically, but practically, morally, religiously—more particularly in the God-attitude toward man and history and the world." "The human spirit in its highest moments points above and beyond the world of empirical reality. . . . Because you cannot weigh and calculate the supramundane, is it nothing?" "Ultimate reality is set forth in symbols, to be sure, for religious people; but is there any reality which is not so set forth?" "Is religious faith true? The only way to answer this is to find out the good of it in life" (*Ibid.*, §§ 34:1, note 1; 43:4, note 1; 45:2, note 3; 45:3, note 1; 49:2, note 1; 59:1, note 1).

"In giving up old concepts, there is danger of giving up their vital content. It seems that the modern man must give up the Satan-concept, but not the Satan-content. Can one similarly give up the Biblical-ecclesiastical God-idea and save the God-content?" "Is 'error' the right word to use of ideas in which one necessarily participates because he is a child of his time? There is hardly an idea which does not in time become antiquated, but must we call our thought erroneous on that account? Ontologically Santa Claus is unreal, but morally Santa Claus is as real as anything in the world. . . . There is a danger of injuring faith when what is of theoretical cognition is imported into it" (*Ibid.*, §§ 73:3, note 1; 80:3, note 1).

But even in the dictated portions of these lectures, prepared in the main, if not wholly, before 1905, one encounters at one or two points unmistakable signs of a lurking or growing subjectivity with reference to the characteristic ideas of religion, as the following quotations will show:

"Faith-knowledge does not limit itself . . . to the bounds of the empirically given world, but mounts above it and beyond it



to the reality (to faith) of the divine will, with its supramundane ends." "It is a question whether it is not simply the functional instead of ontological reality of these ideas [which accrue to Christian faith] with which [dogmatics] is concerned. In the former case it seeks not theoretical but practical proof of rationality. Do the ideas function serviceably in life? The proof of the truth of the ideas is the answer to that question. . . . If the ideas are treated as ontological realities, then we confront a metaphysical problem of the old kind, as to whether or not that ontological reality may be known as such. The functional contention in its more cautious moods, not affirming, yet does not deny ontological verity, but contents itself with agnosticism with reference to the matter. Ontological agnosticism is overcome in orthodoxy by its whole view of revelation and of the Bible" (*Ibid.*, §§ 30:2; 40:2).

One suspects that the parenthesis in the former of these two quotations and the whole of the latter were written later than the main body of the dictated portion of the notes, quite possibly during 1905, when the course was last given.

Not long after these lectures were delivered Dr. Foster in a public address drew a comparison between the present state of religion and the condition of a vine whose trellis has become so decayed as to need to be replaced by a new one. While the change is being made, the vine lies unsupported on the ground. That, it was maintained, is the condition of religion at the present time. Its old God-idea has disintegrated and is now unable to support the religious life as it once did, while on the other hand the new God-idea needed has not yet been constructed.

In 1906, in a critical article on "Modern Theology in Germany, Scotland and France," Dr. Foster wrote:

"It seems to me that the future is with those who believe that the searching fires may burn up much of the wood, hay, stubble—the perishable adjuncts that attach themselves to the edifice of human faith—but that they cannot touch the stones of the building, still less the eternal foundation on which it is built. Yet, on the other hand, I will not conceal my conviction that the dissolving power of these fires must be more fatal to more things which men have thought and still think to be bound up with their religious life, than the ordinary theological science of the English-speaking countries has come to appreciate" (*American Journal of Theology*, X, 1906, p. 758).

The consciousness of problem in the mind of Foster with regard to

the objective validity of the God-idea, but without any definite aligning of himself with the *merely* subjective and instrumentalist interpretations of the significance of religious ideas, seems to have continued for some time. Thus in 1907 he wrote as follows:

"In my opinion the most serious question of the hour is whether religion stands or falls with the affirmation or denial of cognitive function of the ideas which faith possesses. So far it does not appear that religion, as it has been hitherto understood, can endure the negation of the cognitive function and the capability of its ideas. But the interesting point in the present situation is that science, which once urged, then allowed, finally denied, the cognitive function of religious ideas, now disclaims such function for her own ideas and concepts and formulae. . . . Formula and law alike are devices for the manipulation of phenomena and the achievement of practical results—in a word, for orientation of the self in the world of phenomena, and not for the intellectual apprehension of reality. . . . It is evident that, from the standpoint of this pragmatic epistemology, the philosophy and apologetics of religion must do their work all over again. Either they must show that religion does not need to know things, or they must undertake the novel task of compelling science to assume a cognitive function; for if science is going to practice such cognitive asceticism and self-effacement religion must abandon her cognitive indulgence and assertiveness" (*Ibid.*, XI, 1907, pp. 591-592).

In this article Foster himself defended the more conservative view with reference to science, and, by implication, with reference to religion also.

"There is no way to escape the following dilemma: *either*, science is not competent to forecast—but in that case it is worthless as a rule of action; *or*, it is competent to forecast, in a more or less imperfect manner—but in that case it is not worthless as a means of *knowledge*."

"As to the world of religion, let any functional psychologist try to act upon the idea of God, no matter how it arose, and at the same time disbelieve in his existence; he will find that no action will follow, if *ontological* reference be denied to the idea."

"After all, the total humanization of reality is an audacious and unwarrantable proposition. . . . This modern anthropocentric Humanism and Copernicanism are mutually exclusive. It may well be that the statement of the Whole Reality in terms of the human is not a tribute to Its wealth and strength, but an in-

situation of Its poverty and weakness. It may well be that there are more things in heaven and earth than we dream of in our new philosophy" (*Ibid.*, pp. 595-596).

But Foster was not yet through with pragmatism and the religious problems it suggested. In the next year, 1908, he wrote,

"One must sympathize with Höffding in the conviction that the farther one wanders in the world of thought, the greater and sharper the problems become."

"In my opinion Christianity is in the most grievous crisis of its history. I refer . . . to the quiet, bitter struggle which serious men are fighting out in their own souls. . . . It is the dying of the old faith which Western Christendom is experiencing. To be sure, they are not the deepest spirits who are shouting, 'God is dead!'"

"My contention still is that religion is a necessary factor in the struggle for life" (*Ibid.*, XII, 1908, pp. 327, 219, 226).

There are intimations here, not only of intellectual and spiritual struggle, but of a radical modification of opinions, and by the time his book, *The Function of Religion in Man's Struggle for Existence*, appeared in 1909, it was evident that a change had taken place in Foster's attitude and point of view. In the preface, in speaking of those who demand that the present situation with regard to religion "be faced with pitiless veracity," he says,

"My sympathies are with them. Still we do not live in a day—so at all events it seems to me—when it is possible to proffer them the full and solid comfort and hope which warmed the hearts and illumined the faces of the fathers, theirs and mine. But . . . I have tried . . . to cleave to the sunnier side of doubt. And may there be light and warmth enough to keep us from freezing in the dark."

In the body of the book, the title of which indicates its fundamentally biological point of view, we read such statements as the following:

"A man creates whatever concepts and principles he may need in order to make himself master of the phenomena of his environment. To the same end were the gods created." It is an "inextinguishable need of human nature to create gods for itself and so ever to replace old gods by new" (*The Function of Religion*, Univ. of Chicago Press, 1909, pp. 84, 88).

This is not psychology, but psychologism. Man constructs his God-idea, but unless there is no God but the God-idea, he does not construct, much

less create God. If Foster had set himself the task of discussing the function of religion in man's struggle for a *better* existence, he might not have leaped so readily to the conclusion that man had perhaps outgrown the need of God. Man, like other animals, can and will continue to *exist*, at least for a long time yet, whether or not he continues to make use of a God-idea in adjusting himself to the reality upon which he is dependent; but without ethical religion his idealistic aspirations for the individual and for society will not persist and succeed as they might with the aid of religion at its best. Religion, using theoretically imperfect but practically functional God-ideas, has from of old, intermittently at least, renewed man's strength of spirit for the struggle for existence and has thus contributed to his survival and progress; but much that primitive religion did for primitive man is no longer done by modern religion for modern man. However, if consideration be of what ethical and otherwise spiritual religion has done and can do for symmetrical personal development and social peace and progress, the permanent imperative necessity of experimental religion and ethical monotheism immediately becomes quite apparent.

We continue with our excerpts from *The Function of Religion*:

"Religion is the conviction that cosmic existence is such that man is an ideal-achieving being, and that the achievement of his ideals is possible. Or, religion is the conviction of the achievability of universally valid satisfactions of the human will" (*Ibid.*, p. 181).

"The word God is a symbol to designate the universe in its ideal achieving capacity." "But all our highest ideas are but figurative expressions. Even the concept of a personal God has symbolic validity only. And the function of a symbol is not to give an exact report concerning the nature of an object, but to express the appreciations of the subject." "Your God is just *your* God." "It would seem that we are shut up to ontological agnosticism." "However, since personality is our highest idea, it must ever be on that account the word which most fittingly symbolizes our experience of the relation of reality to our ideal values." "The world is such as to produce ideals, or at all events such that ideals may be produced. Whether the world is *for the sake of* ideals—this we may not surely know. . . . Still—and this is my point—the content of our God-faith is the conviction that in spite of much that is dark and inharmonious in the world, reality is on the side of the achievement of ideals such as ours" (*Ibid.*, pp. 88, 108-110, 181, 267).

"There is an element of illusion in religion." "As long as the

religious man does not know it as illusion—and a truly religious man never does—he will derive strength from it for the vicissitudes of life.” “Religion is self-effectuation.” (*Ibid.*, pp. 89, 90, 91, 110; cf. *Christianity in Its Modern Expression*, pp. 2, 12, 18).

When this book, *The Function of Religion in Man's Struggle for Existence*, was published, there were some who felt that the position there taken would not be permanently satisfactory to so religious a man as Dr. Foster. This proved to be the case. Three years later, in the Spring of 1912, there appeared in *The Chicago Tribune* and *The Standard of Chicago* a very significant article from his pen, entitled “The Tragedy of the Titanic.” Some extracts from this article follow:

“Our customary attitude to . . . great catastrophes shows that our relation to God is still too external. We say, ‘If this or that is so, there is a God; but if this or that other thing be so, there is no God.’ The only child dies, and the father cries, ‘Now I know there is no God.’ A people which knows its cause is just is defeated in war. ‘There is no higher righteousness; there is no God,’ it says. . . . We foolish men make conditions and prescribe to God how he must behave, if we are to believe in him. . . . So long as this is our attitude we are still far from the real God. We have a catechism God, not the living God; shadow of God, not God himself. From such a point of view God is an idol. For what makes an idol an idol? That men have fashioned it. The God of whom we so often speak is a God whom we have formed out of our foolish thoughts, to whom we prescribe how he must deport himself, and whom we reject if he does not come up to our expectations—precisely as the primitive man cast aside his fetish if it did not do his will. Hence we share the fate of the idolater—disillusion! The God of our making is a nonentity.

“It is a different way that leads to the real and living God. . . . How may we attain not to a shadow-God, not to a God-idea merely, but to the real and living God? Not by calculation or stipulation, but by experience—the experience of yearning and love, of seeking and trusting, of ever new discovery and ever deeper intimacy. Already our childish souls found God, without stipulations and calculations. God greeted us as the sun greets us. . . . The light of the Eternal shone into our life, and the riddle and the wonder and the splendor began. And in every new step and stage of life our relation to God changed. At length we entered upon the long path of doubt. Science changed our ideas of the world and of the soul. . . . Life gave us hard problems to solve. Life turns out to be different from what we

had expected. The 'Titanic' goes down. But because we have made no table of duties, no stipulations for our God, we do not reject him; we revise our ideas concerning him. Because we do not supply to reality an image of God of our own making, but allow ourselves to be taught by reality what God is—often a terrible God!—because of this we look at just this reality, think, seek, ponder, suffer, wait, and not in vain. After we walk the dark way, we recognize him, and know him better than before. . . . And we are brought to him more profoundly by the fearful than by the friendly and familiar experience of life. Indeed, it is not ease and comfort and safety and health and life, it is need and struggle and sorrow and anguish and death that have given the world its God of goodness and wisdom and power. Did not the glorious men, as the icy billows surged over the 'Titanic,' hearken to the old hymn, 'Nearer, My God, to Thee'? And I warrant you that not the dear women of the departed dead, but the cynical outsiders who speculate about that ocean-disaster, become the atheists. Paradoxical and mysterious as it may seem, the widows, many of them, will testify to the goodness of God in their prayer-meetings. It is a most superficial assumption that men would be nearer to God if the world were less offensive. Faith arises out of the tension between the world around us and the Eternity within us. The stream of life wells up from the deepest need. God rules in the riddle, in the tension; the ever-living, ever-loving is at work there."

Shortly after this article appeared, I wrote to Dr. Foster, asking if this did not mean that he had modified his position since writing *The Function of Religion*. In a letter dated July 1, 1912, Foster replied:

"Yes, I have passed through the slough of epistemological subjectivity, and see more clearly and hold more firmly the objective and social reality of religion. Still, I think that dualism is dead, that our choice is between monism and pluralism—or some new adjustment of the two. But a real God, a real man, a real world—our need of these is too imperious to give them up; and . . . new movements of thought are helping us in this matter."

The dualism to which Dr. Foster refers is "dualistic supernaturalism," the view which emphasizes the transcendence of God at the expense of immanence to the extreme of an agnostic conclusion in the philosophy of religion. This becomes abundantly clear from statements made to his classes in 1905:

"The kingdom of God is supramundane. . . . This does not mean dualism. 'Supramundane' is a noble word. Personality is supramundane." "Some . . . have said that with dualism goes the Christian religion. . . . But, in any case, dualistic supernaturalism has been retired. But what are we to have in place of it—monism or pluralism? I am sure as to negations, not as to affirmations." "The difficulty in adapting the gospel to the modern world-view lies in the fact that it was at first preached lashed close home to the dualistic conception. This was reflected in such forms as 'your Father in heaven'" (*Christianity in Its Modern Expression*, §§ 45:2, note 1; 17:2, note 1; 14:2, note 1).

Not long after he had written the letter referred to—namely, on November 12, 1912—Dr. Foster was present at the annual meeting of the "Baptist Congress" and read a paper on the topic, "What Are the Basic Principles of Modern Theology?" In this paper, which was published in the *Proceedings of the Baptist Congress at Ithaca, New York, 1912* (University of Chicago Press), he dwells emphatically upon the religious necessity of "a real God."

"The reality of religion," he says, "depends upon the reality of God. The question of the truth of our belief in God, even more than the question of the historicity of Jesus and the knowability of his own gospel, is the real crisis of the modern world. . . . An American psychologist says that God is like 'Uncle Sam.' But Uncle Sam is not a being for himself, he is a being for the American people; he did not make them, they made him; he has no feeling or consciousness for them, they have feeling and consciousness for him. And if the American people were to disappear, Uncle Sam would disappear. I do not deny all truth to the statement, I only urge that it is inadequate. I recognize the truth in the idea of the social origin of religion. . . . A patriarchal or monarchical community will duplicate this community as the God-world, with God as patriarch or monarch. In turn a democratic community will democratize the God-world with God as a democrat. But all this must be so stated as to save religion from being illusion."

In the same paper Foster quotes with full approval these sentences from a doctor's dissertation which he had recently read:

"Theology, instead of fading away into mere psychology of religion, must boldly take up the ontological-metaphysical task. Theology must, if religion is not to suffer seriously, undertake to build into the very fiber of its tissues a philosophy of reality.

It must pass, not into a psychological philosophy of religion, valuable as that is, but into an ontological philosophy of God" (D. C. Macintosh, *The Reaction against Metaphysics in Theology*, Chicago, 1911).

Foster then continued in his own words as follows:

"The theologian has the difficult task of vindicating anew the necessity and reality of God. . . . And yet he cannot show that God is *real* unless life shows that God is *necessary*. So the task cannot be primarily done by the excogitation of the theologian, but by the vitality and effectiveness of the religious faith of the people themselves throughout the modern world. Life itself must theologize, else the labor of the theologian will be vain indeed. The soul's need of an infinite task and goal, in view of which it is defiant of the considerations which point to its triviality and transitoriness; the soul's experiences of defeat, loneliness, and sorrow; the soul's imperious demand to be judged by nothing less and lower than the perfect holiness, all-beautiful and all-fair; the soul's craving for an Ever-present Companion—these needs can be adequately satisfied only by the Holy God of living love, on whom man may feel himself freely dependent. Theology cannot endure the agnostic alienation from its material principle . . . of trust in God's providence and redemption. . . . It belongs to the very nature of man to seek what is more than man. . . .

"I conclude therefore that theology cannot allow itself to be reduced to a phenomenology of religion, to a branch of anthropology, and to the psychology of illusion. Its primary concern is not with the origin and growth and historical importance of religion, but with the meaning and value and truth of our Christian belief in God and immortality. It is an overwhelmingly difficult task today, but it cannot be surrendered without inflicting irreparable injury on the life of the human spirit."

A little later still (in January, 1913) the *Biblical World* contained a review of Leuba's *Psychological Study of Religion*, written by Professor Foster. In this review the need of objectivity and ultimately of a metaphysical theology is emphasized, as will be seen from the following quotations:

"The psychology of religion dissolves the religious *Object*, leaving as residuum the modifications of the subject. . . . To reduce God to the idea of God is like reducing bread to the idea of bread. But it is bread, not the idea of bread, that is the staff of life. . . . This reduction of religion to illusion—for that is



what it is—means theoretically the substitution of the science of religion for religion, psychology for theology; practically, an indication that religion is inwardly dead, whatever the leafage on this old tree of life may be, unless indeed counteracting considerations can be adduced by way of decisive rebuttal. . . . If I see aright, our embarrassment is due, not to psychology as such, but to psychology become *Psychologismus*, . . . psychology assuming the role of metaphysics. . . . Difficult as the task may be, it would seem that the interest of theistic religion requires us to pass on from psychology to a philosophy of reality, to a fulfilment of the high task of metaphysics and theology."

From this time on for several years Foster continued to emphasize the religious need of a metaphysical theology and a real God. The following impassioned utterances are from his sermon on "The Function of Death," published in 1915:

"Death . . . is life's interpreter. It tells us better than any science or philosophy can what life really is and ought to be. . . . We have stood by the deathbed of loved ones. It was an instructive hour beyond compare. God spoke so powerfully to us that our souls bowed to the earth before the weight of his words. The truth of life was revealed. The world faded from us. Life's big woes, life's bitter struggles, how they shrivelled into insignificance there! . . . We live by faith, not by demonstration. *The living God*—that alone is the key to the riddle. The living God, the Father, who has revealed himself in power. Thus the point is reached where victory over death is consummated. *God or death*—that is the alternative, the greatest of all the great opposites that pervade the world. If we had no God I do not know how we would escape the dominion of death. Our relation to God the Father is the indestructible bond which exalts us above death. Death is for man, not man for death."

Early in 1916 there appeared an article from Professor Foster's pen, entitled, "The Contribution of Critical Scholarship to Ministerial Efficiency." His constructive religious message is evident throughout the article.

"The world of business needs nothing so much as . . . the ancient faith in God, with his providential guidance over men's work, and his peace and power in men's hearts. Labor watches . . . but it also needs to pray."

"It is not science, it is faith, the communion of all men in and with God, that can make man the lord and not the slave of

capital and machine and organization. . . . Once again the laborer must return to the conviction that his vocation is a calling—his calling by the will and providence of God."

"Men are suffering far more from the loss of God and of the moral imperative than from the lack of bread and work, of recreation and amusement."

"The way to God is not proof, but prayer; . . . we know God because we have faith in him, rather than have faith in him because we know him."

"The distinction between the living God and a concept God is vital to peace of mind and to the power of the Gospel today" (*American Journal of Theology*, XX, 1916, pp. 164, 166, 168, 178; published also in *A Guide to the Study of the Christian Religion*, G. B. Smith, editor, Univ. of Chicago Press, 1916).

Professor Foster seems never to have solved the "difficult task" of theological metaphysics, however, or even to have found a philosophical position in which he could feel sure that the values of religion needed by man would be adequately conserved. In a conversation in the late Spring of 1916 he still stressed the religious need of a metaphysical justification of the idea of a real God; "but," he added with characteristic honesty, "I don't quite see how to do it." The problem of evil oppressed him. May it not be that, apart from the alternating subjectivism and agnosticism of his epistemology, the key to his religious difficulty is to be found in the recommendation, in the article on the *Titanic*, that we "allow ourselves to be taught by reality what God is—often a terrible God"? Here he seems to fail to make a sufficient distinction between what is done through the universe and its laws and what may be reasonably taken as the direct expression and realization of the present will of God. If all cosmic process and the general course of history be interpreted as the product of God's purposive creativity equally with what we find in the self-sacrificing love of the Man of Nazareth and in all that makes for human betterment, we are in religious trouble indeed. The ruthless general course of nature is at most the habitual activity of God's cosmic body, not the creative activity of his Spirit. And the course of history, so far from being determined by the purpose of God, is largely determined by ignorant, capricious, selfish men through whom God is unable to accomplish his good will for the world. If we would be "taught by reality what God is," let it be by the reality of the revelation of God's redemptive, regenerative grace in the religious experience of moral salvation, individual initially and ultimately social. In the *Titanic* article natural disasters are referred to the agency of God in a way that suggests that God is simply Spencer's "Unknowable Energy from which all things proceed." Such a

position could not but prove to be one of unstable equilibrium for a man of deeply religious feeling, such as Foster was, and the recurrence of the problem was inevitable.

The statement is made by colleagues and advanced students of Professor Foster who were much with him during the last year or two of his life, that his position during these years came once more to be very similar to what it had been when he wrote *The Function of Religion* eight or ten years before. Notes of his course of lectures on the Philosophy of Religion during the summer of 1918 contain, as we shall see, strong indications in the same direction. There were reports to the same general effect concerning certain lectures delivered not many months before his death. Of these lectures Professor W. W. Fenn, of the Harvard Divinity School, in a personal letter wrote as follows:

"On Professor Foster's last visit here he gave three addresses: one before the Twentieth Century Club on The Principle of Progress, in which he argued that while no such principle is clearly discoverable in the world, belief that there is one there has such value, pragmatically, that it is desirable to hold it; another, in the Lowell Institute course in King's Chapel, the title of which I do not recall, but my clear impression is that it indicated advance along the lines laid down in *The Function of Religion* towards the position of Ames and the 'Humanists.' The third lecture was the Duddleian. . . . The subject was Revelation and the thesis, as I remember it, was that revelation is correlated with the general notion in government and elsewhere that worth is communicated from above, whereas, in fact, it works up from below, and hence that democracy is adverse to the notion of revelation. Of course, I am giving only my recollection of the impressions made at the time both by the lectures and by my conversations with him."

But whether, as a religious man, Dr. Foster, even during these last years, when his philosophy of religion seems to have been very unfavorable to theism, broke definitively with an essentially theistic type of religious life, is another question. He was a deeply religious man, and for years he alternated between honest philosophic doubt and an equally sincere and fervent religious faith; and it is difficult indeed to believe that he ever finally ceased to be religious in the essentially Christian and theistic way that was so deeply ingrained in his mind and character. One of his intimate friends and colleagues complained to the writer that under the stress of religious need, even to the end, Foster would go back to positions which were indefensible from his critical point of view. His last letter to the present writer, dated April 20, 1918, shows that at that time, only

eight months before his death, he was still the man of prayer, earnestly desirous that he might have a "clear and steadfast religious faith." One would gather that he still felt, as he had six years before, that the need of "a real God" was "too imperious" for the faith to be given up. Yet, on the other hand, one would gather from this same letter that the Great War and the new bereavement it brought to him in the death of his "brilliant soldier boy, Harrison" may have had much to do with the somber and troubled character of his religious thinking during the last year or two of his life. Even before this he was already a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, and now the whole problem of evil was opened up again. Moreover, his exhaustive study of Nietzsche's thought, made during this period, probably did not help him toward a constructive religious faith and hope.

The question as to just what Dr. Foster's religious position or state of mind was in the last year of his life is of such interest not only for those who knew and admired him, but for those also who are themselves concerned with the same problems and those who would understand the early history of "religious humanism" in this country and the influence of the "Chicago school" of philosophy on religious belief, that I make no apology for offering the reader a few fair samples of such further evidence as is available as to his state or states of mind during the period in question. While having recourse to one or two other important sources of information, I shall draw largely upon the careful class-room notes of an advanced graduate student who attended Foster's course in the Philosophy of Religion in the Summer of 1918, and shall make some use of notes on Foster's epistemology made by another similarly qualified student in the Spring of 1917. Unless otherwise indicated, the quotations will represent the 1918 period. The first excerpts are intended to show the extent to which, from a critical intellectual point of view, and at least intermittently during the period in question, Professor Foster had become alienated from theistic ways of thinking.

"We have the God-idea on our hands. What are we going to do with God? If the religious idea is valid, what kind of validity has it? Is it like the country's map, or like the country's flag? It is like the flag, not an image of a transcendent reality, but a symbol of ideals and values experienced in this life. Is God like George Washington, the Father of his country, or is God like Uncle Sam, depending upon the people for whom he functions? He is like Uncle Sam; his reality is functional. After all that is the only kind of reality we know." (This last statement is significant and will be referred to again presently.)

"God is the personification of the ideals of man. Your highest

value is taken and made the principle of the world, and that becomes God. Yet because of the retarding influence of tradition the God-idea is always a little behind the farthest advance of human ideals." "The supernatural world is an artificial projection. The religious man invents a 'real God,' which is but man's own self, immoderately enlarged. Man delights and comforts himself with the shadow of the self, and says to himself, 'I am not alone.' The supernatural is man's self-projection of that in him which he wants to prevail."

"What is the difference in psychological derivation between a God and a nymph or dryad or any other inhabitant of the supernatural world? The God is the assimilative combination of psychical elements of diverse origin, the demonic and the heroic. The demon has its origin from the powers of nature; the heroic, from man. The demonic is metaphysical, transcendent. The heroic is social, immanent. The demonic is mystical; the heroic, ethical. H. G. Wells excludes the demonic and has only the ethical hero, a warrior and sufferer. The Veiled Being is the demonic element, the Abyss, the Fate of Greek thought." "God and other supernatural beings are all alike in that they are creations of phantasy. But the God-idea has shown a capacity for development, for renewal and readjustment to new conditions. The brownie could not survive science, but God has eventuated into the moral ideal."

"Who is the final interpreter and judge of man? Society, we say today. But is society always right? Are we not in danger of submerging the individual under a tyranny of society? Is there not a need for the supersocial? Religion comes in and says that man is a child of God. Suppose my empirical socius goes back on me; I fly for comfort past all actual socii to an ideal Socius on a great white throne, and I am approved by it in my own consciousness. What is God but the future society by which we live and whose approval we cherish when we break with the present and the imperfect? Of course, when this future Socius at last comes to be, it may know nothing about me; but for the time being I can endure through its approbation. It is my Strength and my Stay."

It cannot be denied that these expressions strongly indicate that in 1918 Foster was once more, philosophically and theologically speaking, in the "slough of epistemological subjectivity" of which he wrote deprecatingly in his letter of July 1, 1912. Additional confirmation comes in the form of a letter from Dr. Foster to Dr. E. S. Ames, dated October 9, 1918, for knowledge of which I am indebted to Dr. Hjalmar W. Johnson,

who, with the permission of Dr. Ames, made use of it some years ago in his doctor's dissertation on the religious thought of Foster. On the date indicated Foster wrote:

"Religion is loyalty to the values of human life—only this and nothing more. . . . These values are self-justifying and self-supporting, therefore supernatural sanction and support are superfluous. Hence the present passing of theism, not violently, but slowly, quietly, because it is outgrown. . . . God is not a personal agent, but—well, your 'Ideal Socius' will do. Only, you direct no cult ceremony to an ideal."

Taken together, and apart from some other expressions coming from the same general period, all this seems sufficiently clear and conclusive. But what shall we make of sayings such as the following, also uttered during the Summer of 1918?

"We are not scientifically required to surrender God, but we are ethically required to make a better God. If science alone had to deal with this question, God would be discarded; but *we live by faith, not by demonstration*. Our present God-idea does not work now. It is not true, because we have risen to a higher situation. Now *we must not pass into godlessness*, but we must find a new God-idea which shall be as efficacious as the old idea was" (August 27, 1918).

"Can you make out a case for supernaturalism? If you can make out a case for supernaturalism, and if you can do it so that it will not conflict with naturalism, well and good. You are the man the world is looking for."

"With all the intellect's dower, it cannot prove God, for God belongs to the faith world. The proof of the existence of God is an impertinence; it is irreverent. It is a piece of that old rationalistic depotentialization of religion. 'Nothing worth proving can be proved, nor yet disproved.' He who denies this is back in the old adolescent conceit of the rationalistic period."

"It would seem that so long as morality and the God-idea are held together, the God-idea will survive."

To attempt to construct out of Foster's varied expressions and suggestions a completely harmonious and systematic whole would be a vain undertaking and indeed a work of supererogation. That was not his type of mind. And I think those who have known and understood him would hesitate to conclude that Foster, the religious man, must have adopted in his own practical life all the logical consequences of the theoretical position with which the intellectual imagination of Foster, the thinker

and teacher, was intrigued and captivated at times. Even at those times when his thought was a-theistic, his feeling was by no means anti-theistic; rather was he pro-theistic still in heart and will. As a teacher—and he was a very great one—his favorite method was to sting his students' minds into alert and sometimes painful activity by firing question after question at them, often without giving at the time any certain indication of what his own position was. I note that well on toward the end of the student notes of his 1918 Philosophy of Religion lecture course he is quoted as saying, "So far we have just raised questions and stimulated doubts. Now let us get orderly to work." My own feeling as to the later developments of Foster's religious thought coincides so fully with the opinions expressed toward the end of the letter from the late Professor Fenn from which I have already quoted that I am taking the further liberty of transcribing his words in this connection also:

"As you know, it was his habit to throw himself heartily into a new idea, trying to discover all that could be said for it, to see how far it could be carried, and what would be its consequences if it should be accepted, yet in all this his own judgment was often held in suspense. The result was that he often seemed to hold opinions concerning which he had not made up his mind, and, therefore, was often misunderstood. I am not at all certain, therefore, that he would finally have taken his stand with the Humanists. I remember that once in Chicago, about twenty years ago, when the controversy between James and Royce was warm, it seemed to me that Foster was wholly with James until he remarked casually that he thought the future was with Royce and not with James. I had been misled by his habit to which I have referred, and, remembering this, I dare not say that Foster was so much of a 'Humanist' as he appeared to be. He died with pilgrim staff in hand and nobody can tell what would have been the final resting-place of his thought, if, indeed, it had ever found one."

Several factors which influenced Foster's shiftings of position have been mentioned, but the chief source of his difficulties with theism lay, it may be believed, in what came, under the influence of Dewey and other members of the "Chicago school," to be his general philosophical point of view. His earlier thought, in which the influence of Kaftan and of the Kantians and Ritschlians generally was dominant (See, for instance, *The American Journal of Theology*, II, 1898, pp. 802-827; III, 1899, p. 402; IV, 1900, pp. 631-632; *The Finality of the Christian Religion*, Univ. of Chicago Press, 1906, pp. 484-518), was strongly inclined to a realistic but

dualistic theory of religious knowledge, according to which the independently real but theoretically unknowable religious Object was made the subject-matter of judgments of religious faith and feeling. But finding the dualistic supernaturalism of the doctrines of a purely transcendent God unsatisfactory both religiously and philosophically, he felt that he must give it up, and that in doing so he must also part not only with the dualism of his religious epistemology but with its realism as well. Thus he "threw away the child with the bath." He began to follow Höffding rather than Siebeck in the philosophy of religion; for the concept of relation to the supramundane was substituted that of the conservation and symbolic representation of values. In seeking a knowable divine reality, one directly presented in religious experience, Foster seems temporarily to have identified God, the religious Object, with the subjective content of the religious consciousness, after the manner of subjective idealism, while, after the manner of the instrumentalists, he was tempted at times to admit that the God-idea is never more than a mere human instrument of religious adjustment, without other objective validity. Believing, in spite of his religious feeling, that all realism, religious realism included, was philosophically indefensible, he wandered about for a time in the strange land of a subjective idealism or psychological positivism, unable to be satisfied with either "monism or pluralism" or any "new adjustment of the two."

There is ample evidence, not only in Foster's *The Function of Religion*, but in the 1918 lecture notes, of the dominating influence upon his thought of the radical pragmatism then prevailing in his immediate environment. His psychological approach was that of the functionalists, as citations already made abundantly show; in his theory of truth he capitulated, after a long struggle, to the instrumentalists; and finally even in his theory of reality he began to use the terms and concepts of the extreme pragmatists. Appended are some illustrative excerpts from the student notes:

"Utility is not truth. Beliefs may be useful because they are true, yet they may be useful even if they are not true" (1917).

"Our so-called truths are man-made. . . . The human mind is an instrument of life, of power, and not an instrument for the discovery of truth. All truth depends upon the brain of the man who perceives, therefore there is no absolute, unprejudiced truth" (1917).

"What do you mean by saying that an idea is true? That it copies some ontological reality? No, but that it does its job. A true idea is a working idea. This does not mean that the working is the *proof* or the cause of the truth of the idea. It really is the



truth of the idea. . . . Because a thing is true once it is not necessarily true forever" (1918).

"One must think of the God-idea simply in terms of its functional importance in experience. From this functional point of view it is futile to ask about proofs of the existence of God. And if you give up ontology, has it any meaning to ask, Does value guarantee validity?" (1918).

"The categories of cause, law and order, are nothing but a technique and an instrument extracted out of existence. We know only that they are good tools in their own line."

"We are led to something like James' radical empiricism in epistemology, and to radical evolutionism in metaphysics. The universe is tychistic, an open, loose-jointed, unconcluded world." "Reality comes from moment to moment, experienced as it comes." "Reality, since it can only be known as experience, can only exist as experience." [Note the reasoning from the ego-centric predicament, characteristic of psychological idealism.] "This means a humanization of the universe." "Dewey says that ontology and epistemology must give way to psychology and ethics. Does this mean an abandonment of the world-view? Or have you simply two things: the facts of experience and the method of evolution?"

"Ontology goes, and with it goes the ontological God." "If God be concept, the kind of reality God has is functional reality." "One must think of the God-idea simply in terms of its functional importance in experience."

It is no wonder that, with this subjective or psychological idealism in the background of his mind, Foster found it hard to retain his grip upon the theistic faith. His consciously and confessedly unsatisfactory religious subjectivism was, however, no more necessary than the really fallacious so-called demonstrations of subjective idealism in general. Subjective idealism with respect to God no more follows from the psychology of religious experience than subjective idealism with regard to physical objects follows from the psychology of sense-experience. The religious man may well "beware lest any one spoil him through [this] philosophy and vain deceit." Man makes his *God-idea*, somewhat as he makes his idea of his neighbor, and makes it to some extent in the likeness of himself; but this does not necessarily mean that he makes his God, any more than he makes his neighbor.

George B. Foster was a noble and tragic figure, a rare personality of brilliant intellect, deep spirituality, vivid imagination, and warm friendliness, but fated withal, Prometheus-like, to suffer not only the slings and

arrows of outrageous fortune, but unjustly, for his intended service to humanity. Those who were privileged to know him well should not willingly allow him to be forgotten. Scarcely ever did he speak of himself or his own experiences in the class-room; but these sentences, dated June 20, 1918, in the student notes, are deeply revealing:

“For myself, the biggest loss in the modern view of the world is the loss of comfort. Young people who have not been battered by life do not appreciate this. But by and by, when your children have died and your life is almost gone, and you seem to have done almost nothing, is there anything that can give you heart and hope? Or is it the condition of nobility in man that the All should be against him? If there were a foregone assurance of victory, what kind of man would that give? Nietzsche said, ‘I honor the man who is ashamed when the dice are loaded in his favor.’ Is a world in which the dice are loaded in his favor the kind of world man wants, or that will make him the best kind of man?

“Or again, will man earn values which he knows are going to perish? Will he put his highest value upon values in a world in which he knows that he cannot get them? Or will he do so, only when he knows they will last? Must we know that values will last forever before we create them? When does a man most honor justice, when he stands for it in a world which does not stand for justice, or in a world in which it forms a constituent part? Suppose the dice are loaded against us; does that not give us a better chance to be big and great? Are we equal to such a test as that?

“There are two things to be avoided if man is to come to his own: first, a concept according to which his effort would be futile, as it would be if the world were exclusively mechanical; second, a concept according to which man would have nothing to do, as would be the case if the world were totally rational, rather than rational in spots—in other words, if the world were determined completely to a far-off, divine goal. Would there be any difference between the push of a deterministic mechanism and the pull of a deterministic theology? Both are incompatible with your real man and your real job. Anything but this, that man is a puppet with some divine stage-manager pulling the strings! Anything but man being but a character in a drama, who simply does what is laid out for him. This is not a full man.

“Is it true, then, that man is creator and planner?”

Incidentally, we have here a good illustration of Foster’s method as a teacher.

One must admire, revere, and perhaps pity the man; but in viewing the intellectual and religious difficulties into which he got himself it is difficult to absolve him entirely from blame. He was possessed with such a curiosity as to the quicksands of modern skepticism and unbelief that he must needs step into them, and such courage, amounting almost to bravado, that he must tramp around there until he should feel all about him the powerful suction of the sands—until at last, apparently, it was too late. And all the while, not far away—or so at least it is claimed by some—there stood the perfectly sound and solid rock of religious realism, from of old the standing ground of a theism essentially such as had met the religious need of countless other men, and which he, no less than they, stood in need of and inwardly craved. It has been said of Foster that he “could take more daring excursions into the realms of doubt than would have been spiritually safe for a less deeply religious man.”\* Possibly that is an estimate which needs to be revised. Perhaps his excursions into the wilderness carried him into regions which were not safe, even for him. Even the just must live by faith. As religious, one cannot live by doubt alone.

\* From my editorial preface to Foster’s posthumously published *Christianity in Its Modern Expression*, p. v.

## Chapter VIII

### HUMANISM AND NEAR-HUMANISM

---

Irving King and E. S. Ames were closely associated with John Dewey in their graduate studies, and Ames was for years Dewey's colleague in the philosophy department of the University of Chicago. In their views of religion and theology, as in other features of their philosophy, the two disciples follow closely in the footsteps of their master. In an early article King says explicitly that religious ideas "are only functionally valid and do not refer to ontological realities." The recorded promise of the Holy Spirit as a Comforter (John 14-16) he interprets as having been simply "a practical concept," used by the Master "to allay the sorrow of the disciples"; it had no reference to any ontological reality. So too the dogma of the Trinity was just a device for meeting a particular crisis in the life of the Church; it had temporary and functional validity only. All this follows, of course, from the presupposition that "aside from our world of experience and its successful hypotheses, there is no more existence so far as philosophy is concerned" ("The Pragmatic Interpretation of Christian Dogma," *The Monist*, XV, 1905, pp. 251, 254-256).

The same doctrine is elaborated further in other articles by Irving King, and in his book, *The Development of Religion* (Macmillan, 1910). The religious life as he sees it is "social life in one of its phases." "The highest religious concept, that of the deity," is not "a statement of an existence"; it "symbolizes the worthfulness of human endeavor." "A deity is a symbol, more or less personal in form, of a value or values which have arisen in the experience of some individual person or people" (*The Development of Religion*, pp. 12, 88, 89, 261, 275, 349). We may agree with King that incidentally God-ideas do express appreciated values; but they are certainly meant to represent reality also, and at their best they may be believed to do so reasonably well.

That King's position is subjective or psychological idealism in its interpretation of the religious object is obvious. The psychological interest is dominant, to the practical exclusion of the experimental religious interest, which is inevitably ontological. "For the psychologist God is not a factor in the production of the religious life," but, it is asserted, simply

"one of the concepts of some religious lives, and as such needs explanation" (*Journal of Philosophy*, II, 1905, p. 626). This is like saying that food is not a factor in the sustaining of physical life, but simply a concept constructed for certain practical purposes. "Both the aesthetic and the religious consciousness are constructions," it is maintained, "and the so-called objects of these types of consciousness are the products, so far as psychology is concerned, rather than their stimulating causes" (*Ibid.*, p. 624). "As far as psychology is concerned, the deity may be said to be a value-attitude of a certain kind in the consciousness of some individual or individuals" (*Ibid.*, p. 623). It is urged upon us that we make inquiry as to how any God-concept, like that of Yahweh, developed in men's minds "as if there were no such being" (*The Development of Religion*, p. 275).

But why, we may ask, should we study religious experience with the presupposition that religious belief is untrue, and that psychological idealism is the only religious epistemology worth being given consideration? Does Professor King forget that even for a psychology of the objective, biological type the aesthetic object is not always a mere product of the aesthetic consciousness, but often, as in the contemplation of natural beauty, its stimulating cause? And is it not possible that sometimes some object of experience may stimulate the religious consciousness and call forth the recognition of itself as having the religious value of holiness, divineness, or what the religious man tends to take realistically as revelation? King himself comes within a step—a very important step—of such a position when he admits that "the broader relationships of the present moment may be so vivid in consciousness, their significance for life may be so great that they may merit the objective symbol of *divine* or of *God*" (*Journal of Philosophy*, II, 1905, p. 625). For religion itself, divine value is evidential of divine reality.

The position of E. S. Ames is essentially similar and has been more fully and frequently elaborated in the course of the years. In an early article entitled "Theology from the Standpoint of Functional Psychology" (*American Journal of Theology*, X, 1906, pp. 219-232), he claims that in the new functional psychology "the theological problem is radically changed."

"The question heretofore, from the standpoint of transcendence, has been: Does a supreme, absolutely perfect being exist? Is there an actual, objective reality corresponding to the subjective idea of God? No one has ever been able to produce any adequate answer to that question. The question itself has fallen under suspicion. . . . This does not mean . . . that the idea of God is false and meaningless. . . . In functional terms truth

means value. The question, Is the idea of God true? means, Is the idea of God of value in actual experience?" (*Ibid.*, pp. 228, 229.)

In his *Psychology of Religious Experience* (Houghton Mifflin, 1910), Professor Ames, in accord with his definition of religion as "the consciousness of the highest social values," (Preface, p. vii) and holding that the idea of God is the symbolic embodiment of the highest ideal interests known or felt by those who have employed the idea, claims that the reality to which the God-idea corresponds is no transcendent being at all. On the contrary the idea of God is "the embodiment of ideals," "signifies a system of habits"; and so, as in the case of reflection by a mirror, the reality is to be sought on our own side, "within the actual world of men and things" (*Psychology of Religious Experience*, pp. 313, 318).

"The idea of God, when seriously employed, serves to generalize and to idealize all the values one knows. . . . The 'attributes' in the conception of God are as numerous as the ideal interests of those who use it, for it signifies the totality of our purposes and values" (*Ibid.*, p. 318).

This position is obviously what we have called psychological idealism in religion. It reduces God to the God-idea, regarded not as representing, even symbolically, any independently existing superhuman reality, as intended by the *bona fide* religionist, but only certain empirical objects and human values the existence and validity of which are not in dispute, generally speaking, between the religious man and the non-religious or irreligious. Even Professor Leuba points out, in criticism of Ames's definition of religion, "To bestow upon one the appellation religious because he enters thoroughly into the social movements of his time is to cause confusion by juggling with the word" (*A Psychological Study of Religion*, Macmillan, 1912, p. 54).

In his small volume entitled *The New Orthodoxy* (University of Chicago Press, 1918), a work obviously intended to be irenic and popular, Dr. Ames has expressed himself as follows:

"The Holy Spirit . . . was the Comforter who arose in the thought of the early disciples when they were bereft. . . . It is not impossible to identify the experience out of which this personality arose. It is recognized in the sense of companionship we have felt in the uplifting moments of great gatherings or when moved by an overmastering impulse to utter the truth as we see it. . . . It is not an accident that we think of great social entities as personalities. Our college is our Virgin Mother. . . . Our city has a personality. . . . Every nation is personified through

a definite face and figure. Is it not just as natural to sum up the meaning of the whole of life in the person and image of God? Seemingly it is equally inevitable" (*The New Orthodoxy*, pp. 48-50).

In his preface to the second edition (1925) of this work, the author acknowledges that "it is essential to believe in God in some sense," but the question, "Do you believe in God?" is interpreted solely in such terms as "Do you trust life? Do you think there are some things better than others? Is it worth while to work for ideal causes, to sacrifice something of your comfort?" (*Op. cit.*, pp. xxii f).

In articles published from time to time, Dr. Ames reiterated, with little modification, his central and characteristic doctrine. Religion, he declared, "has no values of its own. The values of religion are also other kinds of values at the same time—economic, political, social, or aesthetic" (*International Journal of Ethics*, XXXII, 1921-1922, pp. 347-365). Quite in the spirit of Durkheim is the statement, "Whatever the symbol, the substance of the idea of God, the objective reality, is the spirit of the group whose awesome will is enforced through the commandments of social custom" (*Journal of Religion*, I, 1921, p. 267). But under the direct influence of Durkheim's and Cornford's claim that what we think of as the universe is socially determined, Ames begins to find a place for a cosmic as well as a social element in the idea of God. "The conception of God in social terms is not inconsistent with the thought of him as also the God of nature *when nature is thought of as socially conditioned*" (*Ibid.*, pp. 268, 472, *italics mine*). This cosmic element in religion and in the reality symbolized by the God-idea is brought out, in the book *Religion* (Holt, 1929), in a way that is foreign to the exclusively social content of both according to *The Psychology of Religious Experience*. It is even admitted that "the religious attitude is one of confidence toward reality and experience, with reference to the values which men at their best cherish most profoundly" (*Religion*, p. 45; cf. pp. 42, 43).

It should not be supposed, however, that this means any great change in Ames's religious epistemology. He is still the psychological idealist in religion, not the religious realist, epistemologically speaking. The God-idea as used by the religious realist has nothing in reality to which it corresponds with literal representational truth. It is a mere symbol of something utterly different, concerning whose reality there is in common sense no dispute, a reality which is now admitted to include nature (as socially conditioned) as well as society. Religion is still social idealism, and social idealism, religion (*Journal of Religion*, I, 1921, p. 267), and even in the book, *Religion*, the idea of God appears to have only the kind of objectivity of reference that the idea of Alma Mater or the idea

of Uncle Sam has (*Religion*, pp. 133-134). Apparently Dr. Ames would still find wholly satisfactory the parallelism so often referred to in such words as these:

"Is the Alma Mater a *mere* idea? . . . Has it not all the reality of the college buildings, the faculties, donors, students, and the social influence which flows through the whole body of traditions? . . . Uncle Sam is not an actual person in the ordinary sense of a man of a certain height and weight, but he is a person in the legal sense. That is, the United States is a person before the law. . . . Uncle Sam [is] the American people in their national organization. . . . The analogy of these cases with the idea of God is suggestive. The reality which the idea of God expresses may be thought of . . . as the Common Will idealized and magnified and presented in personal symbolism. The whole of life, taken in a certain way, is then the reality. The whole of life includes physical objects, earth and sun and stars, motion and ether and light, and also the sentient orders culminating in mankind" (*Journal of Religion*, I, 1921, pp. 267-268, 464, 465; cf. *My Idea of God*, edited by J. F. Newton, Little, Brown, 1926, pp. 238, 239). God is "the personified, idealized whole of reality" (*My Idea of God*, pp. 237, 242; cf. *Religion*, pp. 149, 151, 154).

In his earlier writings, Professor Ames was clear as well as frank, but in his later writings there is a persistent ambiguity which, while it seems to have deceived some unwary readers, succeeds only in irritating others. I do not refer especially to the fact that he often says "God" where according to religious realism he ought to say "God-idea," and "God-idea" where he ought to say "God": e.g., "The gods undergo change with the fortunes of their social group," and "modern metaphysics has undertaken to deal with this idea of God as an independent object" (*Religion*, pp. 122, 123, 126). The criticism mainly intended is that he is not justified in claiming that the idea of God, as he uses it, stands for a reality, much less for "the whole of reality," so long as he defines the Deity in terms of reality *personified and idealized*. Personification of the impersonal is not truth about reality but fiction. Idealized reality is not reality as it really is; it is a mere guiding idea at best. To define God as Ames defines him is to teach that he is unreal, even while proclaiming his reality. It simply is not true that with a definition of God in terms of "idealized reality" his existence is, from the point of view of Ames's religious psychologism, "as demonstrable as the world itself" (*Ibid.*, p. 133). "In religious appreciation," according to Ames, "God is reality idealized and glorified with the attributes of complete and flawless personality," and "since God was first conceived in personal terms, he has been to religious souls the perfect



Person. . . . God is to the hearts who love him, omniscient, omnipotent, complete and absolute perfection" (*Ibid.*, pp. 161, 162). Now of course Ames does not believe that there really is any such perfect Person, though his language, taken apart from its context, might "deceive the very elect." Neither is what he says a fair statement of the point of view of genuinely theistic religion, since the theistic believer would say that God is perfect Person, essentially omniscient and omnipotent, not that he is some other reality thought of *as if* personal and ideally perfect in character, wisdom, and power.

Enough has no doubt been said, but one further passage may be selected for exhibition as a masterpiece of quibbling: "Reality is personal. . . . Not all of reality is personal . . . but there is personality in it. Since man is a part of nature, nature is to this extent personal. There seems, consequently, the same ground for asserting that God is personal. . . . Since man is possessed of personality, the reality we call, nature, or the world, is to that extent personal. Therefore God conceived as society is so far personal" (*Ibid.*, pp. 164, 165). One might recommend this passage to hard-pressed humanistic candidates for ordination! Little harm is likely to come from such "quibbling," if indeed it be that, it is so transparent. Ames's doctrine is now essentially as it was in the beginning of his published work: God for him is simply "experienced reality, taken in a socialized way." Fundamentally, "the reality to which the term God applies . . . is the reality of a social process belonging to the actual world" (*Ibid.*, p. 176).

In J. R. Geiger's pamphlet entitled *Some Religious Implications of Pragmatism*, issued by the Department of Philosophy of the University of Chicago in 1919, the determining influence of the "Chicago School" is manifest throughout. Religious realities, it is maintained, are, like all other realities, "just what they are experienced as"; they are "constituted by experience."

"If the religious object may be said to exist at all, it must exist as a part of experience." "Religious knowledge is not a process of representing . . . the true nature of religious reality or realities. . . . It is not concerned with existence, as such, at all." "Religious judgments are concerned with creating religious values, and . . . these values consist, for the most part, of certain prosperous and beneficent types of social organization and economic control." "Theology must forego its erstwhile metaphysical pretensions" and "assume once for all the reality of its subject-matter," "take for granted the existence of the divine," "as embodied in practical, concrete experience." "The program . . . contemplated for the new theology would amount to

nothing more nor less than the definition of fundamental social values," involving "a criticism of traditional and contemporary standards of value" and "the construction . . . of new standards of value." Thus theology will become simply "a science of social values." "The particular concepts in which religious values have been embodied at the several levels of culture where the God-idea has appeared are not to be thought of as so many efforts to cognize one eternal divine object, transcending experience, but must be regarded as instruments for mediating and controlling experience." "No hard and fast distinction can be made between . . . theology and ethics." Indeed, if we keep in mind those ethicists who "have frankly adopted a biological and social point of view and are making of ethics an experimental science, . . . no distinction whatever can be made between the program being pursued (by them) and the task here assigned to theology." The practical considerations which "demand an independent science of theology . . . do not constitute a ground for any ultimate distinction between ethics and theology." From this point of view the divine is simply "a power that is, in a very fundamental sense, we ourselves." The divine at its most effective and best is simply "the social consciousness of a genuinely democratic community." "The doctrine of the 'fatherhood of God and brotherhood of man' . . . reflects a social order which we have left behind." "The forms of worship employed by conventional religion" ought to be abolished; they "induce a type of righteousness that is self-complacent and condescending, and whose fruits are various forms of social service." Thus there devolves upon us "the task of creating a new type of religious experience" (*Some Religious Implications of Pragmatism*, 1919, pp. 17, 18, 21, 29, 34, 37, 38, 40, 41, 48, 51, 52, 53, 54).

A curious illustration of what may result from applying the "philosophy of pure experience" to religion is to be found in an article by H. C. Ackerman in the *Harvard Theological Review* of October, 1919. This writer, Professor of Old Testament and assistant editor of a theological magazine, makes the following statement: "The confusion involved in the notion of a transcendent deity is the failure to recognize the fact that the God transcendent is unreal in the present; he is simply the God in the future, who becomes or rather is, immanent when experienced. Therefore we need feel no dismay because mysticism does not apprehend God transcendent, since it is impossible to reach *ahead of existence*" (*Op. cit.*, pp. 430-1).

Foster's thought has been and is yet widely and deeply influential. With

Dewey's philosophy, Foster's philosophy of religion had much to do with the rise, particularly in the Middle West, of modern so-called "religious humanism," or "religion without God." Even Foster's colleague in the chair of Christian Theology, Professor Gerald Birney Smith, was influenced far enough by him and by the same influences which played upon him to lead to his giving up theism in any sense closely resembling that which the term has borne in Christian thought. His own proffered substitute remains very nebulous, however. "If the theistic hypothesis becomes too difficult to maintain, may we not abandon it," he asks, "for some more suitable conception without thereby abandoning our belief in *some* kind of cosmic reality capable of stimulating in us the experiences which we call religious?" He has to confess that "just what conception of God will ultimately emerge from the great experiment we cannot yet tell." But even at that, "as between theism and antitheism," he is of the opinion that "the theist is doubtless nearer right" ("Is Theism Essential to Religion?" *Journal of Religion*, V, 1925, pp. 374-377).

Professor A. Eustace Haydon, Foster's former student and now for twenty years or more his successor, was not content to stay in any such middle-of-the-road position. Foster, as we have shown, was a tragic figure, deeply troubled by the situation in which he found himself. But not so Haydon; he seems almost happy to be emancipated from faith in God. In Foster's thought, as we have seen, there continued to be two positions between which he kept shuttling back and forth, a very radical philosophical position and a more conservative religious position. But there is nothing of this in the thought of his disciple, Haydon. All religious conservatism or conservatism has evaporated; only the radical pragmatic philosophy remains.

Haydon's self-introduction to the theologically minded public took place twenty years ago in the shape of a remarkable article entitled "The Theological Trend of Pragmatism," published in the *American Journal of Theology*, in October, 1919. While at the beginning of this article he poses as the expositor of contemporary thought, it soon becomes evident that he is speaking for himself as well as for others; the doctrines of the pragmatists, as expounded by him, are in the main his own. Turning aside, in the philosophy of religion and theology, from epistemology and metaphysics, the pragmatist or instrumentalist, as Haydon understands and represents him, centers his interest in the adjustments and activities of man in relation to his natural and social environment. God comes to be thought of simply as the God-idea, "the personalized embodiment of the practical meaning and value of the environing cosmic forces." The following quotations will suffice to indicate the nature of Haydon's philosophy of religion:

"Religion remains. The gods disappear."

"The Christian God is like all others. He came to be in the tribal desert life. He grew and grew moral as his people advanced. . . . Man projects his ideals into an invisible Socius which, as God, helps him in their realization. . . . He is the symbol of our highest social values. . . . Religion becomes enthusiasm for social ideals" (*Op. cit.*, p. 408).

"This view eliminates definitively the old God of theism. . . . We may still say 'God exists,' but we must mean 'God' and by 'exist' something entirely different from that which the words have meant in the religious philosophy of the past. God, in the old sense, is dead, and only the clinging reverence for the past, the sense of loss, or the fear that the heart and moral will of man are not sufficiently strong to face the facts can make these thinkers continue to call that God which, in the sense of the Christian centuries, is not God. They who understand the situation may still use the old terms aesthetically, as wistful 'make-believe' or as a concession to the people, but the driving power of the functional idea of God comes only as one sees clearly that the God of eternal decrees, of loving protection and over-ruling will, the Parent God, guardian of life and giver of immortality, is no more" (*Ibid.*, p. 409).

"The God of the functional psychologist is a reality, but of an entirely different nature and demanding a quite different religious reaction from the personal, existent deity of the past" (*Ibid.*, p. 410).

"There is much driving power in this understanding of God and of religion provided that it be frankly and honestly presented for what it is" (*Ibid.*, p. 408).

"The temptation to make the postulate or cling to the shadow of a personal, companion God is very great. . . . There can be no possible doubt that the religious man of prescientific, pre-democratic and pre-war Christian tradition will resolutely cling to some . . . reduced and retreating theism. . . . But the thoroughgoing instrumental pragmatist will make no such hypothesis. For the pure love of man he will remove all the old theistic props" (*Ibid.*, p. 410).

"Religion as dependence upon an external superhuman power disappears. Religion as devotion to human service, as enthusiasm for social values and as loyal labor at the tasks involved in eradicating wrong and securing the good, remains. There is here, however, no effort to keep the God of the past in the attenuated form of a 'symbol.' Theism is quietly dropped" (*Ibid.*, p. 411).

"Instrumental pragmatism implies an entirely new religious outlook. The traditional cult and theology become meaningless. 'God' and the 'Absolute' pass into the chamber of memory, glowing symbols of a past order of reality" (*Ibid.*, p. 412).

"Now all the functions of the ethnic gods are slowly passing into the hand of man. . . . Religion will still persist as a powerful driving force in life, but it will be . . . a practical loyalty to human ideals and values" (*Ibid.*, p. 413).

"The pragmatist . . . while waiting for the 'slow, sure doom' to fall, has the courage to attempt to transform this human waiting room into the kingdom of the heart's desire" (*Ibid.*, p. 412).

In later articles and in his books Dr. Haydon has continued to give further expression to the same point of view. He welcomes with joy the "rising tide" of the new Humanism, according to which the value man formerly found in the idea of God is to be looked for in man himself. "Is there any purpose," he asks, "until living beings bring it into existence?" "In persons the cosmic process has become moral and is becoming increasingly intelligent and purposive." The God-idea is "a faulty attempt to envisage reality." We should "seek the value of God in the future rather than the existence of God at the beginning." All that is left for the "disillusioned modern thinker" is to "ground his hope for the future upon the creative, intelligent direction of the cosmic life by man" (*Unity*, Nov. 11, 1929; *Journal of Religion*, I, 1921, 105-106, 218-220).

For Dr. Haydon religion is simply "the cooperative quest of a good life" (*The American Review*, I, 1923, p. 85), "the shared quest for the values of a satisfying life" (*The Quest of the Ages*, Harpers, 1929, p. 1). All historic religions, as he sees them, converge "toward the same goal—the achievement of a good life in a good world" (*Ibid.*, p. 16; cf. pp. 111, 197). But the days of all the gods of all the religions are numbered.

"From the beginning even until now faith in God is the daring confidence of man that the universe in its deepest meaning does allow and give support to our human hopes and ideals. . . . But the riddle of the world remains unread. . . . What help is there for man in the non-human environment? The answer of the future waits beyond the gates of tomorrow; the Gods are the answer of the past" (*Journal of Religion*, III, 1923, pp. 590-597).

Haydon sees plainly enough that even if for the future we may have to be content to define religion, with Ames, as a sense of the highest social values, historically that is not all, nor is it just what, religion has been. "If a thousand definitions of God were assembled," he declares, "one thought would thread them all—man's trust that the universe in its

deepest meaning is on the side of human ideals. They represent man's brave faith that his hope of life's fulfilment will not at last be denied" (*The Quest of the Ages*, p. 89). But for himself and those who stand with him, without theistic faith, Haydon has to confess that there is no such assurance (*Ibid.*, pp. 166, 206, etc.). Still he tries to remain cheerful, even if the worst may be yet to come. "The humanist is an optimist," he once asserted, "or at least a meliorist, even if he is compelled to take his naturalism straight" (*Unity*, Nov. 11, 1929). However, the humanist has relinquished "wealth which he would still gladly keep, if he could," and while Haydon tries to persuade himself that values and ideals are "more secure" from the humanist point of view than if they were supported by a "divine power and purpose," he significantly adds that "perhaps the humanist is too hopeful regarding human nature" (*Unity*, May 5, 1930).

"Religion in the new age," as Haydon sees it, will be religion without God or the idea of God. It will simply "seek a synthesis of the sciences in the service of human ideals" (*The Quest of the Ages*, p. 222). It will employ the "method of accumulating facts, analyzing social situations, solving problems, projecting ideals, and discovering the manner of social organization and reconstruction capable of embodying the ideals" (*Unity*, Aug. 27, 1928). One may agree with Haydon that man must learn to actualize his ideals as far as possible, rather than merely to project them as his ideas of a transcendent God and heaven (*Cf. The Quest of the Ages*, p. 71); and yet, inasmuch as it is maintained that there are no peculiarly religious values (*Ibid.*, p. xii), that there is no need for specifically religious education (*Ibid.*, p. 23), and that scientific quest for human values can make no room for specifically religious behavior (*Ibid.*, p. 201), we cannot but wonder why anyone should persist in using, of the meager residue left after all such subductions, the historically specific term "religion." Perhaps, however, it is good strategy.

Unlike Professor Ames, Professor Haydon carefully eschews the use of the term "God" in expressions of what he still calls his "religion"; yet, strangely enough, he objects strenuously to being thought of as an atheist, even though he himself uses the term "religious atheists" of certain practically idealistic people of India whom he evidently warmly admires for their efforts to destroy a God-idea vastly inferior to that against which he has been directing his attacks (*The Quest of the Ages*, p. 95; *cf.* p. 122). He objects that "atheist is a term without meaning unless there be some authoritative idea of God that has remained unchanged and unchallenged through the ages" (*Journal of Religion*, III, 1923, p. 590). "Theoretically there is no logical reason," he makes bold to declare, "why the term God may not be used with any content," and "if to live in dependence upon the cosmic and social environment for the achievement of our values is to have a belief in God, then there are no atheists, for we

can live in no other way" (*Unity*, Nov. 28, 1928). Besides, does not Haydon point out that "all the gods of the historic religions were, at one time or another, "real enough"—as functioning ideas? (*The Quest of the Ages*, p. 96). Now it may be that the term "atheist," despite an etymological appropriateness on the basis of which it may be defended, has become so offensive through much indiscriminate use as a vituperative epithet that in ordinary polite controversy we ought to confine ourselves to such synonyms as non-theist, anti-theist, and perhaps a-theist; but, as Shailer Mathews remarks, if we concede to those who protest "that the conception of God as a sort of transcendental Uncle Sam is not atheism, . . . this concession simply means that the terms 'theism' and 'atheism' have been redefined" (*Contributions of Science to Religion*, Appleton, 1924, p. 388).

It was no doubt no mere coincidence that while Dr. Haydon was protesting in *Unity* against being called an atheist, the editor of *The Christian Century* was announcing to the world that now, with Professor Wieman's new definition of God, "there can be no atheism." Wieman's definition was to the effect that "whatever the mode of behavior in the cosmos may be upon which we depend for the security, the welfare, and the increasing richness of life, that is God."

It seemed welcome news that now at last the atheist was "down and out." The victory had been won, and all so simply. The old defenders of the existence of God against the atheists had taken up with the wrong definition, it seemed. They had imagined that God was a superhuman being of not only great power but also great intelligence, and thus presumably a conscious and essentially personal being; and those much-misunderstood individuals, the so-called atheists, not knowing that any such being existed, naturally enough had talked as if they knew that he did not exist, thereby "getting in wrong" with the respectable members of Christian society. But now someone had been quick-witted enough to see that if we re-defined the term "God" so as to make it mean something the "atheists" already believed in, the wind would be taken out of their sails and great would be the victory—that is, of course, the *verbal* victory—of the faithful defenders of belief in the existence of God. This was what seemed to have been accomplished; the enemy's flank had been turned, his guns had been spiked, the procession of disarmed prisoners might be expected to appear at any minute, and all was over except the shouting, of which it seemed there was likely to be a good deal. But somehow the expected celebration doesn't seem to have "come off."

Professor R. W. Sellars, of the University of Michigan, a dualistic "critical realist" in epistemology and an evolutionary naturalist in metaphysics, has appropriately enough, as a subjective or psychological idealist

in religion, allied himself with the new non-theistic humanism. "The center of gravity in religion has been openly changing for some time now," he holds, "from supernaturalism to what may best be called a humanistic naturalism" (*The Next Step in Religion*, Macmillan, 1918, Foreword). The new humanistic religion of "an adult and aspiring democracy" (*Ibid.*), will, it is optimistically predicted, "dig new channels that will drain off the energy going to waste in the churches of the past" (*The New Humanist*, March, 1930). Humanism "says yea to life here and now," it is "the religion of the will to power" (*The Next Step in Religion*, p. 212). One would like to know why rejection of theism should be thought essential to a religion of the will to power, especially if it be not an unduly selfish will to power, and whether, up to the present, modern theistic Christianity has not done immeasurably more to promote spiritual power for humanity than this widely advertised humanism. Professor Sellars throws down his gauntlet to the theologians. "I challenge anyone," he writes, "to develop a really tenable system of theology, a system which is self-consistent and relevant to the world as we know it. I am confident that it cannot be done" (*Ibid.*, p. 164). There are others who have perhaps given more thought to the subject than Dr. Sellars has, who are just as confident that it can be done.

Dr. Sellars, like Haydon and most other humanists, clings to the term religion. What he has to say on this point is instructive by reason of its acknowledgment of the inconclusive theoretical reasons and obvious practical motives underlying this proceeding. "Is it justifiable to retain the term religion when its ancient setting has been completely discarded? I have myself asked this question many a time. For many years I felt that it would be better to give up the word entirely. . . . But I could not hide from myself the fact that the consciousness of the time was beginning to employ it in a freer and more constructive way. I had sensed the element of devotion and loyalty which religion had nourished. . . . The socialist is said to make a religion of socialism, the social reformer of his work of constructive philanthropy, the artist of his art. We mean that he has thrown himself wholeheartedly into some one of these fields. And, positively, this means that he has found that concrete and living salvation which ideal effort always brings to a man. He is filled with the spirit of consuming loyalty to what he values. He . . . has exalted himself with a living purpose which illuminates and concentrates his being. I think that this spirit and attitude is coming to be called religious, no matter to what object it attaches itself. Have we not here a mark of identity which justifies the retention of the age-old word? Morality is too cold a word in the ears of most men. Besides, moral values are only a part of the immense throng of appreciations to which man responds. There is need of a comprehensive term, able to take in all those interests and activities which



give life its variety and glory. Is there a better term than religion?" (*The Next Step in Religion*, pp. 220-221). Religion is defined, then, as "loyalty to the values of life," and so long as man shall "dream of beauty, goodness and truth," it is declared, "his life will not lack religion" (*Ibid.*, p. 225).

Professor T. V. Smith, of the University of Chicago, would neither use the term "God" as a symbol of the values of the way of life he advocates, nor, as a rule, the term "religion" for that way of life itself; and yet what he believes and would have others believe and do, seems to be in fundamental agreement with what Haydon, who uses the latter term, and Professor Ames, who uses both terms, have been advocating for a generation. "The conception of a loving, fatherly deity has arisen," Smith claims, "out of human fraternizing. . . . As the tribe in social organization gave way slowly to the nation, God was also liberalized" (*The Democratic Way of Life*, Univ. of Chicago Press, 1926, p. 30). "Religion has too often misconceived its task," he thinks. "It has thought that its task was to proclaim to men an existent deity. . . . The task, however, that it was all the while actually performing—though slowly because of indirection—was to construct . . . a constantly enlarging brotherhood. . . . Conceived in any other way religion is the enemy of the democratic way" (*Ibid.*, pp. 36, 37).

What Professor Smith proposes for religion is that it "content itself with a scientific, an aesthetic and a social emphasis. Ideas shall be treated as ideas, and enjoyed for their beauty, or they shall be treated as projected patterns to be realized through co-operative exertions" (*The Philosophic Way of Life*, Univ. of Chicago Press, 1929, p. 200). He concedes that it is possible to call such activities religious, but he calls attention to the fact that "perfectly good names already exist to describe the other realms, namely aesthetics and ethics and science." He then goes on to say: "It is highly significant that the tendency in our generation to use religious categories to describe either physical processes or systems of ideas or experiences of beauty is largely restricted to those who earlier used the religious terms to connote persons or power that circumvented both ideas and things. The linguistic generosity is never wholly innocent. It is atavistic in import. But we shall not begrudge atavisms to such as find them necessary" (*Ibid.*, p. 201).

We may commend the frankness which refuses to use the terms "religion" and "God" for something essentially different from what these terms have been and still are practically universally understood to mean, and to cover up in this way the great gulf that separates those who use them in their original meaning from those who for themselves can only use them as meaning the appreciation and the symbolic expression of

social values. But it remains to ask whether religion at its best, and an essentially theistic religion at that, may not be able to do something for human welfare which cannot (other conditions, except as affected by this religion, being the same) be accomplished so readily without it. If so, it will still be possible to use the terms "religion" and "God" for values and a reality not wholly covered by aesthetics and ethics and science, as ordinarily understood.

Another near-humanist, who has apparently been deeply influenced by Dewey's philosophy, is Professor H. W. Schneider, of Columbia University. In his pungent article entitled "Radical Empiricism and Religion" (*Essays in Honor of John Dewey*, Holt, 1929), the truth-interest of religion is repudiated. "Religion is an art, not an inquiry," it is claimed. "God is not the *object* of religious experience, but a part of its *apparatus*." "Theology is not primarily a science, but a religious technique. . . . The religious use it serves is that of a mythology. . . . Take away the mythology and you take away the religion. Take away the *belief* in the truth of mythology, and you begin to understand the religion for what it really is. . . . Theology is a religious instrument in the imaginative representation of the fruits of experience" (*Op. cit.*, pp. 345-348).

As I see it, Schneider's position is not only quite inadequate religiously and quite unnecessary philosophically; it is radically mistaken psychologically. It is wrong in rejecting as unessential the interest of religion in the truth of its ideas. The fact is that if you take away the belief that there is any truth in the God-idea, you take away, as a psychological consequence, what is most characteristic in the life of religion. Recognition of ideals and some measure of devotion to them may remain, and this we may still call religion, if we like the word; but it will remain true that from any such purely humanistic "religion" most of what has been characteristic of historic religion, and much of what has made it vital and dynamic, will have been lost. Its peculiar glory will have departed.

I must not close this chapter without referring, however briefly, to one of the most humane and disarming of humanistic critics of theism. I mean Professor Max Carl Otto, of Wisconsin. I should feel obliged to give much more than a paragraph or two to the consideration of his position and arguments, were it not for the fact that a few years ago I devoted some thirty pages of my part in a "conversation about God" to that identical purpose (*Is There a God?* by H. N. Wieman, D. C. Macintosh, and M. C. Otto, edited by C. C. Morrison, Willett, Clark, 1932). From the beginning of his published work (*Cf. Things and Ideals*, Holt, 1924, and *Natural Laws and Human Hopes*, Holt, 1926) he has been set against what he now calls "cosmic theism," that is, against belief in the existence of any superhuman cosmic being; but he is at pains to repudiate what he

calls "ethical atheism," "an assertion that nothing in the experienced world is of value; that intelligence, human affection, character, good will, social idealism are amiable delusions"; or, in other words, "disbelief in greatness of purpose in man's life; disbelief in . . . any of the great ends" (*The Human Enterprise*, Crofts, 1940, p. 293). As for himself, "dedication to the human cause" he would be "happy to call divine," were it not for "other associations" of the word (*Ibid.*, pp. 310, 315). While conceding that "the existence of God is a question which, by its very nature, cannot be decided conclusively," he declares that "no reasonable doubt remains" in his own mind that we human beings "have no friend but each other" (*Ibid.*, p. 339), that "there is no superhuman being who cares what becomes of mankind" (*Ibid.*, p. 325). Making bold to confess what he calls "an affirmative faith in the non-existence of God" (*Ibid.*, p. 334; *Is There a God?* p. 32), and taking his stand on "the sufficiency of man" without God (*Is There a God?* pp. 78, 153), he contends that "not believing in God has worked well, . . . better than believing did" (*The Human Enterprise*, p. 324).

This judgment, we must insist, is not sufficiently discriminating. Superstitious believing in God has indeed worked badly; especially as a means of controlling external nature, positive science has worked much better. But in concerns of character and human relations, right believing in God, added to our science, has worked better still. What we need is not *either* natural science *or* theistic religion, but some reasonable higher synthesis of the two. And as for Otto's reluctant desire to apply the term "divine" to the highest of our spiritual and social values, I for one would not discourage him from doing so in the sense in which he means it, no matter what may be the associations of the word. The appreciative recognition of our highest conceivable ideals as divine in the sense of representing values worthy of our absolute devotion may lead, as we shall see (Ch. XI *infra*), to the recognition of divine processes and a divinely functioning reality, which, while it transcends all mere human agency, is also immanent in the most spiritual phases of human life. As for the boasted self-sufficiency of man, I will simply point out, for one thing, that it is only through faith in a God good enough and great enough for our worship and ultimate trust that we can say, with Foster, "Death is for man, not man for death."

## Chapter IX

### HUMANISM, ECCLESIASTICAL AND OTHER

---

In further illustration of subjective or psychological idealism in religion, we shall now consider a few representatives of the new religious humanism in the active ministry of the churches. Most of these will fall within the left wing of Unitarianism, but we shall begin by examining the position of Bishop William Montgomery Brown.

Bishop Brown's religious history and final religious position are graphically set forth in his book, *My Heresy*, published in 1926. He tells us that he was illiterate until he was sixteen years of age, that in spite of his failure to experience "the witness of the Spirit" or anything but a "willingness to flee from the wrath to come," he was taken into the Methodist Church on probation (*My Heresy*, John Day Co., pp. 11, 12). Being about to move to Omaha, he went to his pastor and asked if in spite of his lack of any religious experience he might receive a letter to the Methodist Church there. "It was a knotty problem, and apparently a new one. The elder prayed for guidance and took a second chew of tobacco before he gave his answer. Whether it was the prayer or the plug that moved him, I do not know, but I received my letter. So I became a Methodist" (*Ibid.*, p. 13). A little later young Brown became acquainted with a Mrs. Bradford, who took an interest in his welfare and later became his mother-in-law. "She was an Episcopalian, and Episcopalians did not go in for emotional tantrums, . . . but rather sought to elevate the soul through calm, dignified, well-organized worship. That was not the reason she gave for being an Episcopalian. The reason she gave was that the Episcopal Church was *the* Church. . . . She had no trouble at all in converting me to her religious views. She could have converted me, I know, without once mentioning the subject. It was a glorious experience—finding God like that. It was what I had been waiting for all my life. . . . It fixed things so that one could be very dignified in his humility. One could prostrate himself before God, in the Episcopal service, and still retain an enormous self-respect" (*Ibid.*, pp. 17, 18).

This obvious superficiality of his religious experience was matched by an equal superficiality in his education. "I learned quickly but I did not

learn anything. I mastered the textbooks . . . because I realized that I had to master them in order to get where I had definitely set out to go. That was to the theological seminary. I went cross-lots. I did not stop to learn anything that a theological student did not have to know. I thought I was getting an education, but I was not. I believed what the textbooks told me" (*Ibid.*, p. 20). Of his intellectual state in his early ministry he writes: "I was not a fool. The only trouble with me was that I was ignorant. I did not know anything; and I believed very seriously what I had been taught by a lot of Churchmen who could not, in the nature of the circumstances, believe them as seriously as I. . . . I was naively orthodox" (*Ibid.*, pp. 39, 41). A very zealous propagandist, he was regarded as a very useful man in the Church, and was eventually made a bishop.

But the zealous young churchman had as yet made little contact with modern thought, except in a very external way. It was not until 1912 that, at the suggestion of his physician, he read Darwin's *Origin of Species*. "Suddenly," he tells us, "a great light dawned. . . . It took away all the understanding I had ever had. The world that I had lived in up to that moment just disappeared. . . . It was impossible, now that the light had been switched on, for me to reconstruct the God which theology had handed to me back there in the dark. . . . How childish it all seemed now. . . . My old theological universe had completely vanished. . . . I was dazed and frightened. . . . I tried to pray. But I could not pray to the Creator of any such universe as I had just discovered. . . . I could not fix his relation to the Protestant Episcopal Church, nor to my own position as a true believer. He surely was not the Creator whom I had believed in. The Creator with whom I had been dealing so intimately was nowhere around" (*Ibid.*, pp. 51-54). "I had been as orthodox as it was possible for anyone to be. . . . Suddenly, by the grace of Darwin, I had moved into times in which all my old theological literalism became impossible. Could I not go ahead with my studies, believing literally everything which I discovered to be literal truth, and interpreting symbolically every creedal statement which conflicted in any way, if literally interpreted, with any of the conclusions which I might happen to reach? . . . I tried it out, and I was amazed at the way it worked. I no longer believed in a personal God, nor in a six-day creation, nor in a literal heaven and hell. I had no reason, in fact, to assume a life beyond the grave, so I gave up that notion too." "In a Christian Church I worshipped my now Unknown God. . . . When I repeated the creeds I did not try to believe anything which I knew was not so. I simply interpreted those creeds symbolically. Matter, Force and Law now seemed to me to be the Holy Trinity. . . . I was not a hypocrite. I was absolutely honest. . . . I longed to worship, and it had become impossible for me to worship in the way to which I had become accustomed, if it were necessary to give the same old

intellectual values to the words which I used. But I discovered that it was not necessary" (*Ibid.*, pp. 61, 62, 63).

Later, during the War, in investigating the question of the economic causes of war, he was led to read *Capital*, by Karl Marx, a book and a writer of whom he had never heard before. "That was another revelation. It was as important a revelation in its way as the revelation of Darwin. It gave me my first clear view of human society. . . . It left my individualism about where Darwin had left my heaven and my hell. . . . Darwin was now my Old Testament, Marx my New. . . . Jesus now became a symbol to me of all the liberators of humanity who had been persecuted and crucified since the dawn of human times. . . . He was the symbol, particularly, of the working class. . . . The Christ story, taken as a symbol . . . might be universally applied. Not only could I accept Christ in this way, I found, but I could also accept all the other so-called religions" (*Ibid.*, pp. 66-68). "The word *God* had now become a symbol. . . . This change from the literal to the symbolic had made belief possible. . . . I could learn anything that I could learn, and I need not be scared any longer from any line of inquiry lest I might discover something incompatible with my creed" (*Ibid.*, pp. 72-73).

In 1924, Bishop Brown was indicted for heresy by his fellow-bishops, on the basis of certain statements made in his book, *Communism and Christianity*. Some of these statements read: "Within the social realm, humanity is my new divinity, and your Divinity (my old one) is a symbol of it, or else, as I think, He is at best a fiction and at worst a superstition" (*Communism and Christianity*, Galion, Ohio, 1920, p. 22). "The God of Christianity . . . is an unreal imaginary spirit, a magnified man without a body, above an imaginary vault" (*Ibid.*, p. 32). "The world's savior God is knowledge. There is no other Christ" (*Ibid.*, p. 77). "Gods in the skies . . . are all right as subjective symbols of human potentialities and attitudes and of natural laws, even as the Stars and Stripes on a pole, Uncle Sam in the Capitol and Santa Claus are all right as such symbols; but such gods are all wrong, if regarded as objective realities existing independently of those who created them as divinities" (*Ibid.*, p. 80). "The gods of all the supernaturalistic interpretations of religion are so many creations of the dominant or master class . . . for the purpose of keeping the slave class ignorant and contented" (*Ibid.*, p. 104). "My God, Nature, is a triune divinity—matter being the father, force the son, and law the spirit." "My God, Nature, the triune divinity—matter, force and motion— . . . is an impersonal, unconscious, non-moral being" (*Ibid.*, pp. 111-112). "The Brother Jesus of the New Testament is only a symbol of all that is for the good of the world, even as the Uncle Sam of American literature is . . . only a symbol of all which is for the good of the United States. . . . However, I am no longer childish enough at any time to look to either

of them to do anything for me. . . . As objective, conscious personalities, my brother, Jesus, and Uncle Sam have had no more to do with my life than the man in the moon" (*Ibid.*, pp. 143-144, 151).

Bishop Brown's defense was made on the ground that he was only doing with *all* the articles of the creed, in interpreting them symbolically, what all his fellow-bishops were doing with *some* of them. Judged by literalistic interpretations, all were heretics. "If they were to insist that the Creeds be interpreted literally *in toto*, even they themselves could not remain in the Church. But if they were to concede that they might all be interpreted symbolically, *I* could remain; and that, apparently, was unthinkable" (*My Heresy*, p. 112). Bishop Brown claimed not to have given up his religious beliefs, but only his supernaturalistic interpretations (*Ibid.*, p. 113), so that, at the trial, in answer to his lawyer's questions he declared his belief in all the articles of the Apostles' and the Nicene Creeds, but added that these statements were not to be understood as a retraction of one word of his book, *Communism and Christianity* (*My Heresy*, pp. 122-123). The bishops being agreed "that the Protestant Episcopal Church was no place for an out-and-out atheist" (*Ibid.*, p. 120), brought in a unanimous verdict of guilty (*Ibid.*, p. 123). In his statement before the Review Court, Bishop Brown reiterated his opinions, that he saw in Jesus "the Eternal Servant manifest," adding that he accepted and revered "the Symbol of the Son of God, the human Epiphany or manifestation of another divine trinity—Truth, Beauty and Goodness" (*Ibid.*, p. 142). Brown was deposed forthwith from the episcopate of the Protestant Episcopal Church, but soon afterward he was made a bishop of the American branch of the Old Catholic Church.

We now come to a consideration of the left-wing Unitarian humanists, of whom Dr. John H. Dietrich, of Minneapolis, and Dr. Curtis W. Reese, of Chicago, may be taken as typical leaders. With them we may refer to Dr. C. F. Potter, of New York, the organizer of the First Humanist Society, of that city. Dr. Dietrich claims to have been the first to use the term "humanism" in its new religious sense, but in this he is probably mistaken; Dr. Foster in his class-room lectures seems to have made use of the term at an earlier date.

Dr. Dietrich claims to have been "the first minister in the Unitarian Church, if not in America, who frankly and publicly embraced [the humanist] form of religion," and to have first used the word humanism in this connection in 1915 (Sermon, "The Advance of Humanism," preached Oct. 2, 1927, *The Humanist Pulpit*, XI, p. 38). One is led to surmise that he gave very little consideration to historical connotations of the term "humanism," but simply substituted it, as belief in man, for theism, as belief in God. "Humanism," he says, "is principally a shift-

ing of emphasis from God to man." In opposition to Cardinal Newman's definition of religion as "the knowledge of God and of our duties toward him," he suggests that religion is "the knowledge of man and of our duties toward him" (*Humanist Sermons*, edited by Curtis W. Reese, Open Court, 1927, p. 96). Dr. C. F. Potter, in *Humanism, a New Religion* (Simon and Schuster, 1930, p. 33), says that "Humanism is belief in man. Theism is faith in God."

The fundamental tenets of humanism Dr. Dietrich states as follows: 1) "the doctrine that man is an end and not a means toward something else" (*Humanist Sermons*, p. 102); 2) "faith in the possibility of improving human life" (*Ibid.*, p. 105); 3) "a belief in the essential unity of mankind" (*Ibid.*, p. 107), and 4) "an abounding faith in humanity, and in its ability to create this better world" (*Ibid.*, p. 109). Belief in "some supreme cosmic principle that is working inevitably along the lines of progress towards the better era, regardless of what man does or fails to do," is regarded as "a menace to the world, in so far as it teaches men to depend upon God for what they should do themselves" (*Ibid.*, p. 110). "We can make this world what we will," it is boldly asserted (*Ibid.*, p. 112).

With regard to God, Dr. Dietrich made a statement under the title, "The Human God," published in the book, *My Idea of God*, edited by J. Fort Newton. In this article Dr. Dietrich says: "Our modern conceptions of God are infinitely higher than the old ones, but they are none the less metaphors. . . . The figure of the Christian God, like that of the rest, is a product of the imagination. He is also a metaphor to be taken figuratively, and not literally" (*Op. cit.*, p. 182). "Humanism . . . enthrones deity in the human heart rather than above the stars. It teaches the doctrine of immanence, that God is in the universe, the world-spirit which pervades the totality of things. It does not confine deity by any means to the spirit of humanity; but it says that this great world-spirit, so far as we know, finds its highest expression in humanity" (*Ibid.*, p. 187). Humanity is to be "the object of our religious aspirations"; God is "the mighty spirit of humanity" (*Ibid.*, pp. 189, 191). "In short, I would set up the ideal of a perfected humanity as the symbol or metaphor which best expresses my idea of deity. . . . I affirm nothing—because I know of nothing—higher than the real but invisible influence of good men and women, both past and present" (*Ibid.*, p. 190).

With these passages in mind, one feels that he must take with a grain of salt the statement of Dr. Dietrich (April, 1930; quoted in H. W. Johnson's unpublished dissertation, "The Religious Thought of George B. Foster," Yale Library, p. 282), "Humanism does not exclude the idea of God—hence it is not atheism, and it is not necessarily opposed to theism. But it does differ from even liberal theology in not putting a belief in and worship of God at the center of religion. The attitude of most hu-



manists toward the idea of God is that of open-minded, if not active, inquiry. . . . After all, whatever God there is, he reveals himself in this planet most supremely through human personality." Another irenic statement of the case is to be found in Dietrich's contribution to *Humanist Sermons*, pp. 96-97: "This religion of faith in man, the only religion that can ultimately save, . . . does not exclude a faith in God. It really is the same thing as faith in God; for, whatever God may be, it is quite clear . . . that we shall get more and more knowledge of Him only by believing that one's highest impulses are His manifestations. . . . And if there be not a God, it makes no difference—there is man just the same." Similarly, in the preface to *Humanist Sermons*, Dr. Reese says, "Humanism is not Atheism. . . . The Humanist attitude toward God is *not that of denial* at all; it is that of *inquiry*" (*Op cit.*, p. vii). After inquiry, however, the verdict is that "the theistic view is theoretically unsatisfactory" (*Humanist Religion*, Macmillan, 1931, p. 24). C. F. Potter, also, in *Humanism: a New Religion*, says, "Humanists . . . are agnostics. They do not say there is a God; they do not say there is not a God; they say simply that they do not know. While Humanists are not atheists, neither are they theists, for the theist believes in God, and the word 'God' means, to the great majority of people anyway, a supernatural being" (*Op. cit.*, p. 8). Yet when Dr. Potter expounds more fully his position, as he does in a chapter entitled "Are Humanists Atheists?" he admits that most humanists, if not all, would deny a supernatural personal deity (*Ibid.*, p. 50), and then goes on to say, "When man gets to the point where he realizes that God was man's own creation for a temporary purpose, he needs God no longer. The idea of God has served its purpose and may be laid aside" (*Ibid.*, p. 58). Religion, as Dr. Reese conceives it, would not be affected "even if the thought of God were outgrown" (*Humanism*, Open Court, 1926, p. 62), and the other Unitarian humanists are in essential agreement.

Humanism, according to Dr. Reese, is characterized by three principles—1) "Humanism is the conviction that human life is of supreme worth, and consequently must be treated as an end, not as a means" (*Humanist Sermons*, Preface, p. viii); 2) "Humanism is the effort to understand human experience by human inquiry" (*Ibid.*, p. xi); 3) "Humanism is the effort to enrich human experience to the utmost capacity of man and the utmost limits of the environing conditions" (*Ibid.*, p. xiii). These three marks of humanism are accepted by Dr. Dietrich, who, however, gives the specific difference between non-theistic and what might be called theistic or Christian humanism, when he adds the fourth point 4) "Humanism accepts the responsibility for the conditions of human life and *relies entirely upon human effort* for their improvement" (Sermon, "The Advance of Humanism," *The Humanist Pulpit*, XI, p. 46, italics

mine). The salient positive features of humanism are succinctly put by Dr. Potter: "Humanism is faith in the supreme value and *self-perfectibility* of human personality" (*Op. cit.*, p. 14. For a further discussion of this ecclesiastical development of humanism, see "Contemporary Humanism" and other articles in *Humanism, Another Battle Line*, W. P. King, editor, Cokesbury Press, 1931; also R. J. Hutcheon's privately printed *Humanism in Religion Examined; Is There a God?* by Wieman, Macintosh, and Otto, Willett Clark and Co., 1932; J. A. C. F. Auer, *Humanism States Its Case*, Beacon Press, 1933; A. H. Dakin, *Man the Measure*, Princeton Univ. Press, 1939).

In its public pronouncements humanism has been careful, as a rule, to place the emphasis upon its constructive program, which includes little or nothing that is not well represented in the ideals and activities of modern theistic Christianity. Thus in the "Humanist Manifesto" of 1933 (See A. H. Dakin's *Man the Measure*, Ch. II), prominence is given to the ideal of "a socialized and co-operative economic order," "the development and fulfillment of human personality here and now," guidance by "the scientific spirit and method," and provision for the reconstituting of religious institutions so that they may "function effectively in the modern world." Among the negative articles, however, one finds disparagement of any sharp distinction between mind and body, the rejection of theism and anything like it such as might involve faith in "cosmic guarantees of human values," and complete discouragement of prayer and worship and any uniquely sacred values or religious emotions. Moreover, in spite of all efforts on the part of the ecclesiastical humanists to stress the positive side of their message, the distinctive features of humanism as a religious and church movement are of course its negative ones. And so, for anything like a fair final estimate of the significance and worth of the movement it would be necessary to observe or justly anticipate its actual or probable results in the second and third humanist generations. Most of the leading humanists of today received their character-training and social idealism under the inspiration of definitely theistic and especially Christian influences. What will be the prevailing character of the anti-theistic humanism of the second and third generation?

There are some prominent a-theistic or anti-theistic writers of today who are alienated from theistic church life and whose principles and tendencies may perhaps serve to illustrate some of the possibilities of the future development of humanism. As representing markedly different types among such writers, we may profitably consider Walter Lippmann, Joseph Wood Krutch, and George Jean Nathan.

Mr. Lippmann assumes the humanist position, rather than argues for it, being bent on addressing himself to the fundamental moral problem

which it presents to its adherents. He even seems to think that most "up-to-date" people are really humanists at heart. "Modern men," he says, "no longer believe in God simply and literally. . . . A man may, if he chooses, think of God as the source of all that seems to him worthy in human experience. But certainly this is not the God of the ancient faith" (*A Preface to Morals*, Macmillan, 1929, pp. 21, 22). "The term 'agnostic' . . . in popular usage," he points out, "has come to mean about the same thing as atheist. . . . The common man . . . feels that those who claim to be open-minded about God have for all practical purposes ceased to believe in him" (*Ibid.*, pp. 28, 29). "If it is true that man creates God in his own image, it is no less true that for religious devotion he must remain unconscious of that fact. Once he knows that he has created the image of God, the reality of it vanishes like last night's dream. . . . When the truths of religion have lost their connection with a superhuman order, the cord of their life is cut" (*Ibid.*, pp. 35, 36).

Here an obvious distinction is blurred. The religious man can recognize the psychology and history of his God-idea without losing his religion, provided he does not identify ontology with psychology, the God-idea with God. Our God-idea is a human construct and a projection, but it is this in order that it may represent an objective Reality which is obviously neither mere construct nor mere projection. Man makes his God-idea in his own image, objectified and idealized, but he trusts that this idea is also in the image of God, as it may well be, if man himself is, in his fundamental nature as spirit, in the image of God. When Lippmann remarks that when "a child born in a modern city" learns to use "the images of the theological drama . . . more or less consciously, he is made to feel that in using them he is not speaking of things that are literally and exactly true," and that the modern man does not take his religion "as a real account of the constitution, the government, the history and the actual destiny of the universe" (*Ibid.*, p. 68), he is no doubt either speaking of religious ideas which have not been adequately criticized and reconstructed to meet the knowledge and needs of today, or else indulging in too sweeping generalities. He is speaking correctly for himself and, we may be sure, for many others, but perhaps not for so many as he imagines, when he asserts that "whereas men once felt that they were living under the eye of an all-powerful spectator, today they are watched only by their neighbors and their own consciences" (*Ibid.*, pp. 133, 134).

"When men can no longer be theists, they must, if they are civilized," according to Lippmann, "become humanists. They must live by the premise that whatever is righteous is inherently desirable because experience will demonstrate its desirability" (*Ibid.*, p. 137). "I take the humanist view," he assures us, "because in the kind of world I happen to live in, I can do no other." But in doing so, he is conscious of the problem

as to "how mankind, deprived of the great fictions, is to come to terms with the needs which created those fictions" (*Ibid.*, p. 144). Facing this problem, he presents a doctrine compounded of pessimism and cynicism, each ingredient of which tends to obscure and moderate the other. Note, for example, incidental indications of a pessimistic rejection of the hope that what ought to be, ultimately speaking, will be (Cf., e.g., *ibid.*, pp. 136-137), and the shrewd and cynical hedonism which makes the fundamental duty to "learn to desire the kind of happiness which is possible" in the non-theistic world to belief in which his faith is reduced (*Ibid.*, p. 151). Until and unless one "feels the vast indifference of the universe to his own fate, and has placed himself in the perspective of cold and illimitable space, he has not maturely looked at the heavens," Mr. Lippman thinks (*Ibid.*, p. 187). In his opinion, "the mature man would take the world as it comes, and within himself remain quite unperturbed," whether it be "comedy, or high tragedy, or plain farce" (*Ibid.*, pp. 329, 330).

But, we may ask, if he is thoughtful and duly sensitive to human values, those of others chiefly, and not simply his own, how can he remain indifferent and unperturbed, whether these values, or the highest of them at least, are to be conserved or not? Is there not something artificial and insincere about such stoicism? If one is to have true peace of mind without doing violence to a spiritual appreciation of values, he must find the way to maintain the attitude of an ethically responsible optimism by drawing out its implications for belief in God and in all that follows from faith in the reality of the God we imperatively need.

Mr. Joseph Wood Krutch, in his book, *The Modern Temper*, gives eloquent and forcible expression to his pessimism concerning the future of rationalistic humanity "in this present unhappy time, haunted by ghosts from a dead world and not yet at home in its own" (*The Modern Temper*, Harcourt, Brace, 1929, pp. xv, 26). As with Lippmann, so here an element of cynicism has entered into the point of view, but in the two writers the pessimism and cynicism are mixed in different proportions. Logically, cynicism and pessimism might be expected to mitigate each other: it is appreciation of human values which gives point to pessimism, and radical pessimism may seek relief from its pain by descending to a depreciation of the values concerned. But psychological association sometimes acts so as to obliterate logical considerations, and we frequently find pessimism and cynicism accentuating each other. That Krutch is a very radical pessimist is abundantly demonstrated in the book before us, but that he is not too cynical to be a humanist still is indicated by the final declaration, "We should rather die as men than live as animals" (*Ibid.*, p. 249).

As in *A Preface to Morals*, so also in *The Modern Temper*, a non-theistic position is assumed, apparently as no longer needing to be argued. "Unlike their grandfathers," the modern temper's victims, according to Mr. Krutch, "do not and never expect to believe in God; but unlike their spiritual fathers, the philosophers and scientists of the nineteenth century, they have begun to doubt that rationality and knowledge have any promised land into which they may be led" (*Ibid.*, Foreword, pp. xv, xvi). Mr. Krutch may be exaggerating when he says that "what man knows is everywhere at war with what he wants" (*Ibid.*, p. 14), yet when he recognizes the practical need of religious faith but holds it to be intellectually inadmissible or inaccessible, he is confronting a very real dilemma in the lives of many today. "Many of the lost illusions had," he admits, "a survival value." Those "whose life is imbued with a cheerful certitude, whose aims are clear, and whose sense of the essential rightness of life is strong, live and struggle with an energy unknown to the skeptical and the pessimistic." But "by this time we should be free from any teleological delusion," he thinks, so that it may be that for the sort of being modern knowledge has made of men, no survival is ultimately possible (*Ibid.*, pp. 18, 19). "Science does not solve our problems," it is pointed out. "We are disillusioned with the laboratory, not because we have lost faith in the truth of its findings, but because we have lost faith in the power of those findings to help us as genuinely as we had once hoped they might help" (*Ibid.*, pp. 63, 76; cf. C. E. Ayres, *Science, the False Messiah*, Bobbs-Merrill, 1927). The modern intellectual has lost faith, not only in God, but in love as well. Love has been "dehumanized" (*The Modern Temper*, p. 114). "We have grown used to a godless universe, but we are not yet accustomed to one which is loveless as well, and only when we have so become shall we realize what atheism really means" (*Ibid.*, p. 114). Even tragedy is not left to us, for while "a tragic writer does not have to believe in God, . . . he must believe in man" (*Ibid.*, p. 127), in his inherent nobleness and value, but "all contemporary minds feel that man is relatively trivial" (*Ibid.*, p. 130). According to the modern temper "there is no more any such thing as *the good life*" (*Ibid.*, p. 153).

But while Mr. Krutch is certain of the evil condition in which man with the modern temper finds himself, he can himself point out no way of escape. "Scepticism has entered too deeply into our souls ever to be replaced by faith" (*Ibid.*, p. 247). "Metaphysics may be only the art of being sure of something that is not so, and logic only the art of going wrong with confidence" (*Ibid.*, p. 228). "Proclaiming itself essentially an art rather than a science, metaphysics . . . ends by confirming the very despair which it set out to combat" (*Ibid.*, p. 232).

Fundamentally the trouble is, according to Krutch, that the modern man is losing his optimism because he is losing his vitality (*Ibid.*, p. 234).

Perhaps modern decadent civilization will be rejuvenated, not by philosophy, but by the coming into prominence of some younger, unexhausted race (*Ibid.*, pp. 237 ff). But there is a limit beyond which we would not be saved by mere animal vitality in distinction from the insight that is peculiar to man. "Ours is a lost cause and there is no place for us in the natural universe, but we are not, for all that, sorry to be human," rather than mere animals, however well fitted to survive (*Ibid.*, p. 249).

Krutch's book is so bad that it begins to be good. The pessimism is unrelieved, but the cynicism is not absolute. Krutch is pessimistic because he feels that the faith we need to make life worth living is inaccessible to us as modern men. But does he or anyone else *know* that only the negative answer can be truly given to the question whether or not it is logically and psychologically possible to believe as we must in order to live as we ought?

We cannot read the future with certainty; but it may not be an unreasonable surmise that second-generation humanists may commonly occupy a position much like Walter Lippmann's, and that many of the third generation will have been led to conclusions not greatly different from those of Joseph Wood Krutch. May we fear that the fourth generation will find its sentiments expressed in these words of George Jean Nathan?

"To me pleasure and my own personal happiness are all I deem worth a hoot. The happiness and welfare of mankind are not my profession; I am perfectly willing to leave them to the care of the professional missionaries of one sort or another; I have all that I can do to look out for my own happiness and welfare. . . . I am against all reform and all reformers. . . . The world, as I see it, is defective only to those who are themselves defective" (*Living Philosophies*, Simon and Schuster, 1931, pp. 222, 223, 227).

Here even the *humanism* seems to have completely evaporated.

## Chapter X

### LOGICAL AND LOGICAL-PSYCHOLOGICAL IDEALISM IN RELIGION

---

#### I

We have been considering subjective or psychological idealism in the field of religion, the view according to which God is nothing but the subjective content of religious experience—the God-idea in human consciousness, for example. We now turn to a second elemental form of idealism in religious epistemology, namely, what we may call *logical idealism*. It consists in identifying God, not with an idea in the psychological sense, but with an idea in the logical sense; not with a content of consciousness, but with a meaning, a possible predicate, a universal idea or ideal. As a general theory of knowledge logical idealism rests upon an interpretation of the relation of predicate to subject in the true judgment as being a relation of existential identity, so that the subject judged about, the reality, must be what the predicate as such obviously is, namely, a logical idea; whereas it ought to be recognized that the relation of the predicate to the subject is merely one of *practical* identity, or functional equivalence. In a true judgment the predicate (which is an idea) represents the subject matter (which is not necessarily an idea) sufficiently for the purposes which ought to be considered in the choice between the judgment in question and its contradictory (V. Ch. I *supra*, par. 2; *The Problem of Knowledge*, Macmillan, 1915, Ch. XIX; *Religious Realism*, Macmillan, 1931, pp. 329-334). In a general way logical idealism is reminiscent of the so-called Platonic doctrine of ideas, and in the realm of religion logical idealism consists in identifying God with the universal idea of the divine, the ideal of divine perfection, that which would be the appropriate predicate of an existent God, if there were any such reality.

There was a touch of this religious logical idealism in the religious philosophy of the late Georg Simmel. While holding that for the religious man faith is essential, and the particular content of faith a secondary matter, Simmel concludes that all that the critical philosopher of

religion, as such, is able to do is to determine the content of any religious faith which is to be spiritually acceptable to the modern man; as critical philosopher not only can he not prove the existence of God, he is unable to hold with any great degree of assurance to any religious faith whatsoever. More explicitly, while the religious man must be assured *that* God is, even if he may be in doubt as to *what* God is, the typical modern man knows very well *what* God is, but is unable to say *that* God is ("Ueber Religionsphilosophie" in *Philosophische Kultur*, 1911, pp. 207, 209, 215, 224). (The idea of) God is (the idea of the realization of) an absolutely complete and self-sufficient person, so that God is undoubtedly personal—perfect personality, in fact—the only question being whether he *is* at all, or not (*Ibid.*, pp. 214, 225). As intermediate between a metaphysical philosophy of religion which would assert the reality of God in some defined sense of the term, and the purely psychological point of view of a religious subjective idealism or psychologism, Simmel suggests the critical view that the God-idea is the projection of the transcendental, that is, the rational and ideal, in human life itself (*Ibid.*, p. 233). He recognizes, however, that the acceptance of this view would mean turning away from the forming of "transcendent pictures" and relating oneself to them, and turning instead to the direct production of ideal values in human life (*Ibid.*, pp. 240-241). In other words, if one were to accept the religious logical idealism of Simmel, he would have to content himself with the unaided human pursuit of spiritual ends, without the support of the characteristically religious attitude toward God as a really existent superhuman Producer and Conserver of universally valid spiritual values.

According to Paul Natorp, religion is not concerned with any special kind of construction of objects within human experience, as are science, morality and art. Rather is religion the feeling of the infinite significance of the human ideals of truth, beauty, and goodness (*Religion innerhalb der Grenzen der Humanität*, 2nd. edn., 1908, p. 44). Its concern is with "the worlds of knowledge, of will, and of artistic phantasy; of theory, of practice, and of poesy; with what is, and what ought to be—the True and the Good—and that third which is as it ought to be and ought to be as it is—the Beautiful" (*Ibid.*, p. 32). Thus from the point of view of critical philosophy all claims of religion to transcend the limits of humanity are rejected (*Ibid.*, p. 46). Only such religious feeling as is compatible with science, morality and art is justified. The ideas of religious objects, aesthetically elaborated, may be given place, but only as artistic symbols, not as scientific truths (*Ibid.*, p. 49). The idea of the moral law as the command of God is permissible only in so far as "God" is the name applied to the moral ideal as its infinite value is appreciated by human feeling (*Ibid.*, p. 56). The idea of the personality of God is simply a sym-



bol of the fact that the moral is inseparable from the personal (*Ibid.*, p. 57). The idea of human immortality symbolizes the eternal validity of the idea of manhood as a goal (*Ibid.*, p. 60). In like manner all the fundamental ideas of the religious consciousness may be admitted, once their dogmatic claim is relinquished and they are content to be mere symbols of ideal values. As dealing simply with symbols religion is thus seen to be closely related to art (*Ibid.*, p. 61).\*

According to Wilhelm Windelband the philosophy of religion is a branch of critical philosophy, having to do with an ideal which, as such, transcends the empirically given, although at the same time it cannot be said to have any concrete reality beyond its partial embodiment in human lives. This religious ideal, corresponding to the logical, aesthetic and ethical ideals of the true, the beautiful, and the good, is the holy, or divine ("Das Heilige," *Praeludien*, 1911, Vol. II, pp. 273-275). But when the question is asked as to the essence of the holy, as against the good, the beautiful and the true, the answer is that the holy is the normal consciousness of the true, the beautiful and the good, experienced as transcendent reality (*Ibid.*, pp. 276, 282). Reality must not be interpreted in this connection as involving actual existence. In other words, when norms become motives there is an immediate experience of the "world of spiritual values," a "transcendental feeling" out of which necessarily develop the myths and dogmas by means of which the attempt is made to represent the transcendental Ideal as if it were a transcendently existing Object. Thus religious feeling sets for ideation an insoluble metaphysical task. All theological dogma, like all myth—all "transcendental ideation," in fact—is "transcendental illusion" (*Ibid.*, pp. 282, 284, 286, 287). Windelband here represents the critical philosophers who, as Herman Lüdemann points out (*Das Erkennen und die Werturteile*, Leipzig, 1910, pp. 71-231), are distinguished from the Ritschlian theologians in that, while they recognize religious values, they do not undertake to erect an ontological theology upon the basis of such values. Thus by means of his abstract idealism with its "world of spiritual values" Windelband succeeds in levitating himself precariously above the positivism (Windelband, *op. cit.*, p. 282) which would identify the divine with some mere subjective content of consciousness; but in the end the difference between his and Natorp's position "within the limits of humanity" is not great. Any concretely existing God in either system would have to be of the positivistic, purely human variety. It would not be the Object of man's feeling of absolute dependence.

Hugo Münsterberg interprets reality in terms of eternally realized

\* It is significant that some years after the publication of these ideas Natorp modified very considerably his religious philosophy in the direction of a religious realism and theism.

ideals or values, which are to be distinguished from all existence, physical or psychical. "In the system of physical and psychical objects there is no room for any possible value. . . . Nature, material and mental, knows no values. . . . Yet this does not mean that there are no values in reality" (*Science and Idealism*, Houghton Mifflin, 1906, p. 12). "History alone can never lead to absolute values" (*Ibid.*, p. 17). Individual pleasure, even when felt in connection with truth, beauty, morality or religion, is no basis for the affirmation of absolute value (*Ibid.*, p. 21). But we cannot assert the relativity of values without implying in the judgment the absoluteness (absolute value) of truth (*Ibid.*, p. 23). Absolute values are postulated, rather than found; they are the absolute demands of the overpersonal will in each of us (*The Eternal Values*, Houghton Mifflin, 1909, p. 113). "The philosophy of the eternal values [is] the systematic deduction of all possible absolutely valid values from one principle, and for us this one principle is founded . . . on the will to have a world which is self-asserting" (*Ibid.*, p. 115). There are, in fact, four groups of such absolute values, the logical, the aesthetical, the ethical and the metaphysical (*Science and Idealism*, p. 41; *The Eternal Values*, Chs. VII to XIV). Metaphysical values are of two sorts, religious (the values of holiness) and philosophical (the values of absoluteness) (*The Eternal Values*, p. 356). Religion and philosophy both demand a progression over the limits of the experienceable, and "both aim to apprehend the worlds of values as ultimately identical with each other" (*Ibid.*, pp. 354, 355). "In the system of values the holy represents the last value, coordinated with the true, the beautiful, and the good. But . . . in another sense it is superordinated on these other three values, inasmuch as the purpose of religion had to be the unification of all the other values" (*Ibid.*, p. 356). Religion thus seeks "the pure value of a perfect harmony of our values" (*Ibid.*, p. 357). "The highest religion must arise where the purest union of the purest values is given" (*Ibid.*, p. 358).

The religious mind looks up to God as Creator, Revealer, and Savior with "a certainty which is superior to all logical power of demonstration" (*Ibid.*, p. 359, etc.), and yet this God who "gives the value of holiness to the world" is created by religion to fulfill this purpose (*Ibid.*, p. 356). The reality of which this psychical product, God, or the God-idea, is the symbol, is the fourth system of values, coordinate with the true, the beautiful, and the good, and yet super-ordinate too, as the harmony of those three.

This philosophy, surely, is an abstract or logical idealism with reference to the religious object. God has transcendent reality (validity ?), but as absolute ideal only; he has no actual existence either empirically or in the transcendent realm.

George Santayana seems classifiable either as a psychological idealist in religion or as a logical idealist, or better, perhaps, as both, occupying in some of his statements the one position, and in some the other. In any case religious ideas are symbols of something either in "the realm of matter" or in "the realm of essence." In the former case the view is psychological idealism; in the latter, logical idealism. On no account are the ideas to be taken literally. Santayana protests warmly against "the abuse to which religion is subject when its symbolic rightness is taken for scientific truth"; to take its poetic conceptions literally as information about experience or reality elsewhere, is the "insidious misunderstanding" which clings to it (*Reason in Religion*, Scribners, 1905, 1926, pp. 11, 13). "The idea that religion contains a literal, not a symbolic representation of truth and life, is simply an impossible idea" (*Ibid.*, p. 98). Psychological idealism, the doctrine that God is nothing but the God-idea in human minds, is indicated by such statements as that religion creates "a fabulous environment" (*Ibid.*, p. 32), and that, except for the fact that we have "experiences of dependence and of affinity to that on which we depend," religious thinking is "poetry or mythical philosophy, in which definitions not warranted in the end by experience are given to that power which experience reveals" (*Ibid.*, p. 30). On the other hand, logical idealism is indicated by the statement that "the ideal of deity . . . is nothing but the ideal of man, freed from those limitations which a humble and wise man accepts for himself, but which a spiritual man never ceases to feel as limitations" (*Ibid.*, p. 45).

Interpreting the language of Christian faith in a way which may seem at first to mean a very subjective pragmatism and religious psychologism, but which turns out on closer examination to fall under what we have called logical idealism in religion, the late Professor A. C. McGiffert, of Union Theological Seminary, merits mention in this connection. In an article on "The Pragmatism of Kant" (*Journal of Philosophy*, VII, 1910, pp. 197-203), Dr. McGiffert stressed the non-theistic as well as non-metaphysical interpretation of such really ambiguous sayings of Kant as, "I will that there be a God, . . . [and] that my existence be endless"; "ideas made by ourselves with a practical purpose and which must not be given theoretical value." Now the true Kantian meaning would seem to be, not that these ideas are not *true* as theory, but that they cannot be *proved* by theoretical considerations. This is suggested by Kant's own language, "not that these propositions theoretically considered are proved to be true, . . . but that there is subjective and from the practical point of view valid ground to justify us in acting as if we knew that these objects were real" (references given in McGiffert's article). But McGiffert's interpretation, so similar to that published the next year by Vaihinger, was to

the effect that what Kant meant by postulating God was "simply to postulate will and power for the accomplishment of a certain definite purpose, beyond that and aside from that, nothing" (*Ibid.*, p. 201).

In his Nathaniel W. Taylor Lectures at the Yale Divinity School Centenary in 1922, published in 1924 under the title, *The God of the Early Christians* (Scribners, 1924), Dr. McGiffert defended the view that to the early Gentile Christians Christ was God, and the only God they had. When this work appeared there were some who had listened to McGiffert's spirited participation in the discussions of the American Theological Society, and they could not fail to notice how close to his own purely pragmatic, anti-metaphysical theology the position attributed by him to the early Gentile Christians really was. But nothing was said by the lecturer to indicate explicitly his own position, any more than there had been in his interpretation of "the pragmatism of Kant."

Recently, however, in his posthumously published *Christianity in History and Faith* (Edited by A. C. McGiffert, Jr., Scribners, 1934), it becomes very evident how far toward the radical left McGiffert's Kantianism, Ritschlianism and religious pragmatism really were. Christ, it is claimed, has given us a new idea of God, not the God he worshipped (that was the God of the Jews), but the God he was. The Christian God is the Christ-like God. Christ was God, not as divine substance, but as God-like purpose. This divine, Christ-like purpose is the true God of the Christian religion. Recognition of the supremacy of that ideal is true faith in his divinity. Making Christ and his purpose supreme is making him our God. We believe in God, in the sense of Christian faith, when we trust in Christ enough to make him supreme in our lives. If we do this, we have our God in Christ, practically, ethically—whether, metaphysically speaking, there be a God or not. This is, no doubt, very good Christian ethics, but as religion it is severely truncated and most inadequate (*Op. cit.*, Chs. VI-XIV).

In the earlier phase of his religious thought Bertrand Russell may be regarded as a logical idealist; in the later phase, as a subjective or psychological idealist. His earlier thoughts may be gathered from his famous essay entitled "A Free Man's Worship," first published in 1903, and from another entitled "The Essence of Religion," published in 1912. From the beginning Russell rejected theism. The God who is "all-powerful and all-good, the mystic unity of what is and what should be," is created by the mind of man ("A Free Man's Worship," *Philosophical Essays*, Longmans, Green, 1910, p. 62; also in *Mysticism and Logic*, Norton, 1929, p. 49). Traditional teaching in early childhood and the wish for safety account in most cases for belief in God (*Why I Am Not a Christian*, Watts, 1927, pp. 19, 20, 29). "The insistent demands that our ideals shall be already

realized in the world is the last prison from which wisdom must be freed" ("The Essence of Religion," *Hibbert Journal*, XI, 1912-1913, p. 62). Any God who exists is evil, it is maintained, and unworthy of our worship. "Shall we worship Force, or shall we worship Goodness? Shall our God exist and be evil, or shall he be recognized as the creation of our own conscience?" (*Philosophical Essays*, p. 63; *Mysticism and Logic*, p. 50). "In a religion which is not theistic, love of God is replaced by worship of the ideal good" (*Hibbert Journal*, XI, p. 59, italics mine). This definition of God in terms of the Ideal is in accord with the definition of religion as "the subordination of the finite part of our life to the infinite part" (*Ibid.*, p. 60).

In "A Free Man's Worship," in spite of a pessimistic naturalism, not to say materialism, this religion of devotion to the Good is expressed with fine moral idealism. Man's origin, growth, hopes and fears, loves and beliefs are held to be "but the outcome of accidental collocations of atoms"; nothing can preserve an individual beyond the grave, and "all the labors of the ages . . . are destined to extinction in the vast death of the solar system," so that "only on the firm foundation of unyielding despair can the soul's habitation henceforth be safely built" (*Philosophical Essays*, pp. 60, 61; *Mysticism and Logic*, pp. 47, 48). In spite of this, however, the "free man" will "preserve his aspirations untarnished"; he will learn "that energy of faith which enables us to live constantly in the vision of the good." "To abandon the struggle for private happiness, to expel all eagerness of temporary desire, to burn with passion for eternal things—this is emancipation, and this is the free man's worship" (*Philosophical Essays*, pp. 61, 64, 69; *Mysticism and Logic*, pp. 48, 50, 55).

But with the passing of the years Mr. Russell's aspirations seem to have suffered a change. The lofty moral idealism is no longer in evidence. Whereas he had held up the ideal of giving to our comrades, "before they are seized by the silent orders of omnipotent Death," "the pure joy of a never-tiring affection" (*Philosophical Essays*, p. 69; *Mysticism and Logic*, p. 56), he now regards love "on principle" as not genuine (*What I Believe*, Dutton, 1925, p. 22). "What we 'ought' to desire" is explained away as being "merely what someone else wishes us to desire" (*Ibid.*, p. 29). It is held that "outside human desires there is no moral standard" (*Ibid.*, p. 32), and conscience is explained as consisting of "vague reminiscence of precepts heard in early youth, so that it is never wiser than its possessor's nurse or mother" (*Ibid.*, p. 60). Accordingly it is without surprise that we read, in the Preface to the 1929 edition of the essay on "A Free Man's Worship," the statement that this essay depends upon a metaphysic which is more Platonic than that which Mr. Russell now believes in; he no longer believes that the realm of essence is eternal and independent of existence. After suggesting that psychoanalysis would probably show that the reasons

he might give for the change have emotional sources, and that the solemn mood in which "A Free Man's Worship" was written might contain enough of a "humbugging quality" to interfere with the pursuit of truth, he concedes that pragmatically he still sees a certain value in the mood expressed in the essay, "since it is calculated to be useful in times of stress and to reinforce a desirable kind of obstinacy in the face of obstacles" (*Mysticism and Logic*, 1929, pp. v, vi). From this later point of view it is evident that the logical idealism has been given up; the ideal good which was offered as a substitute for theism's real God is now regarded as no more worthy of worship than the natural human and animal desire for pleasure.

Dean W. R. Inge is enough of a Platonist to seem at times an abstract logical idealist in religion, identifying God with the universally and eternally valid Ideal. He feels that "alike in religion and philosophy the important question is not whether God exists, but what we mean when we speak of God" ("Confessio Fidei," in *Outspoken Essays*, Second Series, Longmans, Green, 1922, p. 2). Such a statement is symptomatic of something not quite identifiable with *bona fide* theism. The same thing may be said of other characteristic assertions: "To throw our ideals into the future is the death of all sane philosophy" (*Ibid.*, p. 4). "The home of religion . . . is the ideal. But ideals which have no counterpart in reality . . . are frivolous and can bring us no deep or lasting satisfaction" (*Ibid.*, p. 5). "The three attributes of God, . . . Wisdom, Beauty, and Goodness, . . . we call the absolute values. . . . They are eternal and unchangeable. . . . We do not make them; they are above us. It is rather they that make us immortal and blessed if we can lay hold of them and live in them" (*Ibid.*, p. 21). "These ultimate values . . . are the most real of things" (*Ibid.*, p. 22). "The universe does not appear evil to anyone who lives in the pursuit of the True and the admiration of the Beautiful." "Evil is the inseparable condition of good in the world of will, . . . the world of which time is the form. There is no evil in the eternal world in which God dwells, because in that world there is no time, no conflict, no contingency of any kind." "The eternal world must, I suppose, contain crushed evil, illustrating negatively the triumph of positive values" (*Ibid.*, p. 23). "What we call heaven and hell are not two places; they are the two ends of a ladder of values" (*Ibid.*, p. 24). "I do not think that faith in God can be justified unless we believe in an eternal spiritual world of which this world is an imperfect likeness" (*Ibid.*, p. 25). "In so far as we lay hold of wisdom, goodness and beauty, we are in possession of those things which exist in their own right; which are always and everywhere the same. . . . This is to lay hold of eternal life" (*Ibid.*, p. 26). "God is . . . the value of values, the supreme value" (*Ibid.*). "Mere time con-

tains, so far as I can see, no element of value and therefore none of existence" (*Ibid.*, p. 29). "Transferring the idea of progress to the being of God Himself" is an error (*Ibid.*, p. 30). "There are no other absolute values besides Goodness, Beauty, and Truth. . . . Absolute values are ends, not instruments; they require disinterestedness; . . . a very pure happiness attends our apprehension of them; . . . they bring with them a permanent enrichment of our personality" (*Ibid.*, p. 31). "They are indestructible and eternal. . . . They belong to a supratemporal and supraspatial sphere of existence. . . . They exist after the mode of spiritual beings, which are the externalized thoughts of God" (*Ibid.*, p. 32). Höffding's argument for the "conservation of values" seems to Dean Inge unnecessary. "In their essence they [ideal values] are supratemporal and inherently imperishable; in their manifestation they are perpetually created anew" (*Ibid.*). "Otherworldliness alone can transform this world," because "the other world is the reality of which this world is the shadow" (*Ibid.*). "Eternal life and survival are not the same" (*Ibid.*, p. 33). "The main thesis of this essay ['Confessio Fidei'] is that true faith is belief in the reality of absolute values." Truth, Beauty, and Goodness are the revealed attributes of God (*Ibid.*, p. 35). "There is no particular place where God lives" (*Ibid.*, p. 36). "Eternal life is not an endless succession of being in time, but being of which time is not a measure" (*Ibid.*, p. 43). In all this Dean Inge claims to have "kept almost entirely to that philosophy of religion which is common to Platonism and Christianity" (*Ibid.*, p. 45). Obviously then, what he has done has been to combine abstract or logical idealism, according to which God is the supreme value, with Christian theism, according to which God is an existent Spirit.\* It can scarcely be claimed that such a course is logically self-consistent.

Professor Kirsopp Lake defends a religious point of view which he calls "Experimentalism" as opposed to both "Fundamentalism" and "Institutionalism." Agreeing with what he takes to be the consensus of opinion among scientists, that there is no evidence of the existence of any anthropomorphic God whatever, he nevertheless refuses to abandon the use of the word "God" (*The Religion of Yesterday and Tomorrow*, Houghton Mifflin, 1925, p. 109). The God of the Experimentalist is "Immaterial Reality" (*Ibid.*, p. 110). "A different way of putting the same thing is to speak of 'Values' instead of 'Immaterial Reality.' This view equally affirms the reality of Truth, Beauty, and Wisdom, and identifies them with God, who is all of the 'Values' taken together" (*Ibid.*, p. 112). In this Professor

\* I find in the writings of the late Professor George Cross a single statement which strongly suggests the same attempted synthesis: "The name *God* is another name for this ideal which enables a man to move toward the self-fulfilment that lies in it at the same time that it commands him to do so" ("The Motive of Theology," *Journal of Religion*, II, 1922, p. 399).

Lake thinks of himself as following Plato, and regrets that Dean Inge, after arguing for the ultimate reality of values, "seems to postulate a God of whom the values are the attributes, . . . instead of saying that these Values are God" (*Ibid.*, pp. 109, 112). For the Experimentalist, to be religious is to live in accordance with the Values which we know. Theology is the totality of what we know about the reality of the Immaterial, i.e., of Values, Ideas and Thought (*Ibid.*, pp. 109, 112). "The Devil is the ghost of primitive man, and God is the unborn life of the world that is to be" (*Ibid.*, p. 131). Professor Lake uses the term God in another and more realistic sense, when he defines God as "Purpose, that is, the fixed eternal and immutable Laws of the universe, together with the course and results of the evolution which is produced in obedience to them" (*Ibid.*, pp. 119, 120).

## II

A third form of idealistic epistemology in the field of religion is a combination of logical with psychological idealism. From this point of view the religious object is knowable as the abstract religious idea, the Ideal, in the concrete idea, consciousness. In illustration of this type of religious philosophy we shall cite the Italian neo-realists, Croce and Gentile.

According to Benedetto Croce, while there are many abstract sciences, there is but one science of the concrete, namely philosophy. Philosophy is the philosophy or science of mind; it is occupied with the full reality of mind as manifested in history, and mind, be it noted, includes all reality. "All philosophy, as we go on unfolding it, shows that there is nothing outside mind. . . . Mind fashions this so-called external something because it enjoys fashioning it, and escapes by re-annulling it when it has no more joy in it" (*Logica come scienza del concetto puro*, p. 120; H. Wildon Carr's trans. in *The Philosophy of Benedetto Croce*, Macmillan, 1917, p. 12). This philosophy of mind is methodological, not metaphysical. Metaphysics undertakes to deal with the transcendent, but for Croce's idealism there is no transcendent; all is immanent, and the philosophy, or history, of reality immanent in mind is the one all-inclusive or concrete science. "Philosophy is an elucidation of the directive concepts of historical interpretation" (*Critica*, Vol. XVI, p. 308; Carr, *op. cit.*, p. 35). Life or mind has two aspects, knowing and acting, and each of these in turn has two forms. Knowing in the form of intuition is of particular images; knowing in the form of conception is of universal relations. Acting for individual ends is concerned with the useful; acting for universal ends is concerned with the good. These four forms of life or mind complete reality, and philosophy in its four branches, aesthetics, logic, economics, and ethics, completely covers reality, studying it from within as the un-



folding of an ideal history. ("Since the subject of history is the concrete life of mind and since life consists in imagination and thought, in action and morality, and yet is one throughout the variety of its forms, the elucidation works of itself in the distinctions of aesthetics and logic, of economics and ethics, and all are conjoined and resolved in the Philosophy of Mind." Croce, *Critica*, Vol. XVI, p. 308; Carr, *op. cit.*, p. 35.)

It will thus be seen that Croce leaves no special realm for religion. This is because he regards religion as fundamentally mistaken. It is an "imperfect attempt at philosophizing" (*On History*, Eng. tr. by D. Ainslie, Harcourt, Brace, 1921, p. 62). It undertakes to deal with the transcendent, whereas all reality is immanent. True philosophy is history, and history is of the beautiful, the true, the useful, and the good; there are no other things. In so far as religion, as cognition, intuits what is beautiful or thinks what is true, it is nothing beyond what falls under aesthetics or logic; in so far as it intuits as beautiful what is not beautiful, or thinks that to be true which is not true, it is not valid, theoretically considered. In so far as religion, as action, does what is useful or good, it falls under economics or ethics; in so far as it does what is neither useful nor good, it is not valid, practically considered. There is therefore no room for religion as something at once specific and valid. Religion is a mythology, a hybrid activity, taking aesthetic constructions as logically valid, as true. As works of art the myths are legitimate, but as history or philosophy they are not valid. "Religion is an imperfect and immature attempt to present reality, and it must therefore yield its place to philosophy. The great philosophical task before us today," Croce tells us, "is the casting off of this worn-out garment, and this will be accomplished by the rejection of the concept of a philosophy of history and its replacement with the concept of history as identical with philosophy" (H. Wildon Carr, *The Philosophy of Benedetto Croce*, p. 185).

"The myth presents itself to the believer as revelation. . . . To the believer the myth is not art. It can only become art to one who no longer believes it, for whom mythology is valuable as a metaphor, for whom the divine world is the beautiful world, and God the image of sublimity. Considered in its genuine reality, as it exists in the believer's mind who has never known doubt, the myth is religion and not simply imaginative form. To such a one religion is philosophy. . . . The artist does not believe nor disbelieve his images, he produces them" (Croce, *Breviario di Estetica*, p. 28; Carr, *op. cit.*, pp. 182-183).

"Philosophy comes to be cursed in prose, and above all in poetry, by many souls tormented at the death of their gods, the loss of their idols, and who can find no adequate consolation in

the new ideal world—homesick souls to whom purity of ideas will never be compensation for loss of cherished images." "In religious mythology there are not only hedonistic idols, but also cosmical explanations, the wealth and importance of which, enveloped in mythological form, present the measure of the progress of religions and of their successive approximations to philosophy. On the other hand, they cannot pass into and be fused in philosophy by insensible degrees, but only through a spiritual revolution by which the will is purified of every material residue, egoistic or eudemonistic; by which also the religious thoughts and images are stripped of their transcendent or mythological character, made to renounce the sensible attraction of these garments and are transfigured into ideas" (Croce, *Critica*, XV, p. 67; Carr, *op. cit.*, p. 188).

According to Croce's philosophy reality is an evolution of the Idea in history, in concrete life and mind. If this progressively immanent Idea were to be spoken of in religious terms, as the Divine, it would become evident that what we are offered here is a fusion of logical with psychological idealism in the realm of religion. The Divine is dependent for its existence upon human consciousness, and is at the same time independently real in the sense that it is a universally valid ideal.

From the philosophical point of view the system is open to the criticisms that have been made, time out of mind, against solipsism (*cf.* A. Crespi *Contemporary Thought of Italy*, Knopf, 1926, pp. 122ff.), and that are urged by many against the radical empiricism of our day, with its ambiguous straddling of the fence between idealism and realism. If philosophy or history, is the science of concrete mind, the question arises, Whose mind? And if the reply be made, All human minds, then, on the basis of the view that all reality is in concrete finite mind (there being no Absolute Mind recognized in this system),\* the further question arises, How does the individual philosopher or historian get from the content of his own mind to the content of other minds, and what kind of reality have those entities which, according to the "abstract" sciences, mediate this communication from mind to mind?

In view of this difficulty the rejection of religion on the ground that it affirms transcendence is a begging of the question, and that in favor of a view whose logical difficulties are much greater than those of the view rejected. In fact, the affirmation of transcendence is philosophically indispensable; its only alternative is solipsism. And as for the discovery that there is no place for religion since aesthetics, logic, economics and ethics cover the field of reality, it need only be said that there can be no ob-

\* See *What Is Living and What Is Dead in the Philosophy of Hegel?* Eng. tr. by D. Ainslie, Macmillan, 1912, Chs. X, XI.

jection on religious grounds either to religious intuition being aesthetic, or to religious thinking being true, or to religious activity being useful and good, provided also it is specifically religious. Croce's rejection of religion is either on different grounds from those he mentions, or else it is unnecessary and trivial.

The philosophy of Giovanni Gentile, even more emphatically than that of Croce, may be characterized as absolute idealism without the Absolute. He agrees with Berkeley that "to conceive a reality is to conceive, at the same time and as one with it, the mind in which that reality is represented," so that "the concept of a material reality is absurd" (*The Theory of Mind as Pure Act*, Eng. tr. by H. Wildon Carr, Macmillan, 1922, p. 1). He has full confidence in the argument for idealism from what R. B. Perry has called "the egocentric predicament." "Whatever effort we make to think or imagine other things or other consciousnesses outside our own consciousness, these things or consciousnesses remain within it, precisely because they are posited by us, even though posited as external to us. The without is always within. . . . There is for us nothing which is not something we perceive, and this means that however we define it, whether as external or internal, it is admitted within our sphere, it is an object for which we are the subject" (*Ibid.*, p. 28). "We never come to our thought's margin, we never come up against something other than thought. . . . The mind is never able even to refer to an object which is external to it" (*Ibid.*, p. 30). "Speaking strictly, there can be no *others* outside us, for in knowing them and speaking of them they are within us" (*Ibid.*, p. 13).

But Berkeley himself was not true to this doctrine of the "*ideality of the real*," according to Gentile. "In declaring that reality is . . . the totality of the ideas of an objective, absolute Mind . . . he contradicted the fundamental principle of his whole thought" (*Ibid.*, p. 2). But thinking is "not only an element of reality"; it is "the whole or the absolute reality" (*Ibid.*, p. 4). As Hegel saw, reality is itself thought (*Ibid.*, p. 53).

And thought moves dialectically, as Hegel saw also (*Ibid.*). Unlike Croce, who rejects the Hegelian dialectic and gives no place to religion in the necessary movement of rational thought, Gentile finds a place for religion as the second moment in a dialectic, of which art is the first and philosophy the third. In art, thought knows itself as creating a world wholly its own, without objectivity in either nature or history. In religion, thought discovers itself as object, but attending to the otherness of the object *as object*, it overlooks the fact that it is *itself* that is object to itself. Here the object of human knowledge is imagined to be an absolutely transcendent Object, the self-existent and unknowable God. But in philosophy we reach the synthesis of art and religion; philosophy recognizes that the Object, God, is nothing but mind itself, as object to itself. Thus, by a somewhat different route, Gentile arrives at Croce's view of religion as

man's contemplation of his own spirit, projected and idealized (See Crespi, *op. cit.*, pp. 188-189).

Gentile thus rejects popular theistic religion as essentially similar to art, except that it does not understand itself, and as corrected and transcended in philosophy. But he gives his own philosophy a religious interpretation according to which the divine as existent is rational thought, not at all transcendent, but wholly immanent in the historic life-process. It is logical idealism in religion in combination with subjective or psychological idealism. "Idealism has the merit without the defect of mysticism. It has found God and turns to Him, but it has no need to reject any single finite thing; indeed without finite things it would once more lose God. Only, it translates them from the language of empiricism into that of philosophy, for which the finite thing is always the very reality of God. And thus it exalts the world into an eternal theogony which is fulfilled in the inwardness of our being" (G. Gentile, *The Theory of Mind as Pure Act*, p. 277).

It is easy to see that this theory of religion is religiously unsatisfactory. It addresses man, conscious of his ultimate dependence and of his interest in values which it is beyond his unaided power adequately to conserve, and bids him depend upon himself, for the reason that there is nothing but himself and the activity of his thought to depend on. But even more fundamental is the criticism to be made in the name of philosophy. The "egocentric predicament" is a fact; we never have awareness of any objects except objects of which we are aware. But what of it? This predicament is surely no proof of idealism, for the obvious reason that the predicament would still exist, as the new realists have pointed out, even if realism were true. And so perhaps realism is true, in spite of the predicament. But with this possibility granted, Gentile's whole argument comes tumbling down in ruins.\*

\* For a comprehensive study of Gentile, see Roger W. Holmes, *The Idealism of Giovanni Gentile*, Macmillan, 1937.

## PART III

### CRITICAL MONISTIC REALISM IN RELIGION





## Chapter XI

### RELIGIOUS PERCEPTION

---

We must now turn from our criticism of the over-dogmatic mystical epistemology at the one extreme of monistic realism in religion, and of the various unduly negative manifestations of one form or another of epistemological idealism at the other extreme, and prepare to face the constructive task of building between these two extremes, if possible, an adequately critical form of direct or monistic realism in religion, such as can be made the basis and bulwark of the claim that in religion at its best there is valid experience of divine reality, making possible religious judgments which can reasonably claim to have knowledge-value. In order to facilitate the intent to be definite and clear, we shall employ here, as in the introductory chapter, the device of a series of numbered headings for successive definitional paragraphs. Our concern is with principles of religious epistemology.

#### 1. *Religious Knowledge*

Religious knowledge includes adequate and adequately critical (i.e. logical) certitude of the validity of ideals or values appreciated as divine (i.e. as worthy of universal human devotion), and a similar certainty (adequate and valid certitude) of the trueness of religious judgments (i.e. judgments about the divineness of reality or value, or about the reality of the divine). It is subjective religious certitude critical enough to become objective certainty.

#### 2. *Divine Ideals or Values*

Ideals, or values, such as rationality, beauty and goodness of personal life, individual and social, which we may reasonably regard as valid ends always, everywhere and for all persons, may be characterized as eternal and absolute ideals, or values, not in any altogether static sense of these terms, but in the sense already indicated, that they point out directions of development which are and, we may reasonably believe, always will be entitled to our absolute or wholehearted allegiance and devotion. Such absolute and eternal ideals or values are, *qualitatively* considered, divine. By this use of the term "divine" we do not mean to assume or

imply either the existence of an ideal or divine being or any theory as to the origin of the ideals in question, but merely to indicate their coincidence with the qualities of character which spiritual religion tends to ascribe to its ideal object. Not only are the ideals specified divine in the sense that they are worthy of our supreme or absolute reverence and devotion; it is also true that only as including them somehow could there be justly claimed, for any being, our absolute allegiance, worship and trust.

### 3. *The Divine as Actualized*

In so far as these divine ideals or values are real in the actual world of human experience, their actualized presence there is a presence of the divine, a qualitatively divine presence, an immanence of the divine within nature or humanity or both. It is not necessary for the actualization of divine ideals or values to be complete and unsurpassable for it to be genuine and real.

### 4. *Divine Processes and a Divine Factor*

There are in the world many processes in which divine ideals are being realized, divine values produced, as well as values and forms of being which are instrumental to divine values. Such processes are divine processes, and that reality, whatever it may be, which is related to this emergence of divine values in a divine process as its adequately potential and dependable cause is a divine reality. Without attempting to say as yet whether that causal reality is ultimately one or many, and while not maintaining that it is an all-inclusive reality, we may take it, in the light of its effects, as having at least some sort of collective and cooperative unity, so that we may speak of divine-value-producing reality as a divine factor. In the complex of divine processes, or divine-value-producing behavior, then, we intuit, perceive, or apprehend the presence and activity of a divine factor. This divine factor is not to be identified—certainly not to be exclusively identified—with the human self, either as the simple individual or in the aggregate, as society. Working in and through the cosmos there have been “personality-creating activities” (*cf.* Shailer Mathews, *The Growth of the Idea of God*, Macmillan, 1931) which antedate all activities of human personalities themselves, and there have been and still are processes and a factor or factors in the education of personalities toward valid ideals, which cannot be identified simply and exclusively with the human. Divinely functioning reality has caused human personality with its immeasurably great potential values to emerge, and through experience is educating humanity toward the knowledge, appreciation and choice of permanently valid values. This divinely functioning cosmic reality, this qualitatively and functionally divine factor we may call God, provided it be understood



that, for the present, no further connotation of the term is implied than such as is involved in the foregoing. With this intentionally meager connotation of the term God, it may be affirmed as a known fact that God exists. In other words, there is a divinely functioning reality, not to be identified exclusively with the human, and not to be identified with reality as a whole, since not all reality is making for the realization of absolutely valid ideals. Empirical awareness of this divinely functioning reality we may call religious perception or religio-empirical intuition. It seems desirable, for the sake of the many who in our day find themselves seriously questioning the reality of God in the full theistic sense of the word, to enter in this way upon a gradual constructive procedure. As Clutton-Brock remarked, "There are many now who cannot believe in God unless they call Him by another name" (*Studies in Christianity*, Dutton, 1918, p. 169).

The late Professor Gerald Birney Smith claimed that "men may believe in God without being able to define God" ("Is Theism Essential to Religion?" *Journal of Religion*, V, 1925, p. 377). Abandoning his former Ritschlianism, in his later years he advocated "an empirical method of investigating what we mean by the word 'God'" (*Journal of Religion*, VII, 1927, p. 321). "What we worship in our cosmic environment must be empirically studied," he insisted, "and our conception of God must be formulated in tentative terms which grow out of that experience." Among his tentative and sketchy definitions of God are these: "That vast cosmic mystery which has produced [man] and holds him in its power"; "that aspect of our non-human environment which is found to reinforce and to enrich our life"; "some kind of cosmic reality capable of stimulating in us the experiences which we call religious" (*Journal of Religion*, V, 1925, p. 377).

No one has gone so far as Professor Henry N. Wieman in suggesting a variety of ways in which the divinely functioning reality may be characterized and defined and at the same time known, strictly speaking, to exist. His definitions of God, in so far as God may be undeniably affirmed to exist, have a more than curious interest; aiming to formulate the irreducible minimum of religious knowledge, they generally succeed sufficiently to have positive value for reasonable reassurance in religion. I take the liberty of subjoining here and after the next numbered paragraph some of the most striking of his formulations.

God is "that Something upon which human life is most dependent for its security, welfare and increasing abundance" (*Religious Experience and Scientific Method*, Macmillan, 1926, p. 9).

"God is that feature of our total universe which most vitally

affects the continuance and welfare of human life." "God is that behavior of the universe which has nurtured human life and which continues to keep it going and growing" (*The Wrestle of Religion with Truth*, Macmillan, 1927, pp. 14, 62).

"God is that which progressively and in greatest measure increases the value of existence. The progressive integrating process of the universe is what does this. Hence it is God." "God is whatever in all the universe is that which can help us most." "God is that upon which we feel that we are dependent for the preservation and increase of values." The principle of integration at the level of human society is that by which we are made more interdependent and more cooperative. "This process . . . is more than human in the sense that it goes on independently of human purpose." "God [is] the integrating behavior of the universe," "the integrating process which has reached in society the highest historical development" (*Methods of Private Religious Living*, Macmillan, 1928, pp. 17, 19, 51, 52, 58, 59, 79).

"God is one of the constitutional tendencies of nature. . . . God is the creator and sustainer of value. . . . We can do nothing save make a few connections and then wait for the value-making process of nature to do its work." "God is at least one phase of the working of nature, whatever else he may be" (*Religious Education*, December, 1928), "that cosmic working which sustains and magnifies our most precious values" (*The New Republic*, Mar. 6, 1929), "whatever actual process in the universe is capable of producing the greatest good," "a value-making process at work in the universe," "the process which sustains and magnifies the values of the world," "the constitutional tendency of the universe toward progressive integration" (*The Christian Century*, Feb. 14, 1929).

"A very special order and process of interaction . . . does sustain and promote the values of life. This order and process of interaction is more or less approximated in actual fact. This approximation, together with whatever degree of complete actualization in the future history of existence it may make possible, is God" (*The Issues of Life*, Abingdon, 1930, p. 178). "God the awful, beneficent mystery" (*The Christian Century*, May 27, 1931).

God is "the interaction which creatively communizes experience," "a kind of interaction which . . . produces that kind of community which is called Christian love," "that for which we can live and die because it is supremely worthful," "super-

human because it operates without the conscious intent of man and in opposition to most of his ways," "superhuman, furthermore, because it generates personality." "The existence of God is beyond question." "God is the inescapable reality" (*The Christian Century*, Sept. 30, 1931).

"God is that structure which sustains, promotes and constitutes supreme value." "God is not merely an abstract order that does nothing. Neither is he the process of nature that does everything regardless of value. But he is the structure of supreme value viewed as possibility of existence, and also that kind of process in nature which most nearly approximates this order of supreme value and promotes further approximation to it. Thus God is both the most beneficent actuality and the supreme ideal" ("God and Value," in *Religious Realism*, edited by D. C. Macintosh, Macmillan, 1931, pp. 155, 175).

"God is that kind of interaction between things which generates and magnifies personality and its highest values." "Maximum mutuality is the highest expression of God in the lives of men" ("Theocentric Religion," in *Contemporary American Theology*, edited by V. Ferm, Round Table Press, Vol. I, p. 351).

"God is that interaction between individuals, groups and ages which generates and promotes the greatest possible mutuality of good." "God . . . is a total system of patterns constituting supreme good, partially in this world as a process, but extending far beyond this world to include the highest possibilities of glory and blessedness that may ever visit this universe at any time throughout the entire span of the universe; and including, furthermore, whatever higher possibilities there may be which chance may prevent from entry into our world at any time" (*Is There a God?* ed. by C. C. Morrison, Willett, Clark, 1932, pp. 13, 14).

"Supreme value is not a mere concept. . . . It is the greatest actual and possible connection between activities which makes them mutually sustaining, mutually enhancing and mutually meaningful. . . . It is growth of meaning and value in the world. . . . This growth of meaning and value in the world is God. . . . Supreme value is growth of value. . . . It commands our supreme devotion. . . . It carries human personality to whatsoever higher fulfilments are possible to it. . . . It is superhuman . . . not supernatural" (*The Normative Psychology of Religion*, Crowell, 1935, pp. 45, 51, 52, 137).

"God is the growth which goes on through the succession of limited systems of value. . . . This growth with its infinite

possibilities is the reality of greatest value" (*Journal of Religion*, XVI, 1936, pp. 404, 405).

"The method I follow finds God in his work. Hence God is an assured fact." "He who says that God is not a process is denying that God exists." "My statement . . . that when you pray to God, you pray to an interaction, . . . would be more accurate if I had said you pray to a reality which has the characteristics of interacting with you." "The work of God is the growth of organism," "the growth of organic connections, that is, the growth of all meanings and value" (*Christendom*, Spring, 1936, pp. 428, 430, 431, 441, 442).

"God is the uncomprehended totality of all that is best." "God [is] in nature and nowhere else, although not to be identified with the whole of nature." "God is . . . an actual, existing, operative reality in our midst bringing forth all that is highest and best in existence, far beyond the scope of our specific understanding. He is the creative synthesis at work in the immediate concrete situation where we are." "God is the growth of connections between activities which are appreciable," "the growth of living connections of value in the universe." "God is growth of meaning" (*The Growth of Religion*, Willett, Clark, 1938, pp. 259, 265, 348, 349, 353, 363, 366).

"If substance is itself activity, . . . God is then a substantial agent; more clearly . . . the most inclusive system of all internally related activities, actual and possible, which make an organic whole." "God is that ordered process (substantial agent) which generates and sustains by its working [the] uncomprehended abundance of value," "that order (substantial agent) of existence and possibility which includes . . . new and unpredictable values . . . and forever works by way of growth and unifying interaction to actualize them," "the creative order which works through all levels to sustain and actualize the most inclusive and perfect system of all value" (*Christendom*, Autumn, 1936, pp. 771, 776, 778). "We can know . . . that God exists . . . with as much certainty as we can know that an objective world exists or that other persons exist" (*Ibid.*, p. 762).

It will be possible for many to enter sympathetically into these definitions and statements of religiously significant empirical fact, if they remember that Dr. Wieman does his thinking ordinarily in terms of a perhaps rather one-sided process-philosophy, that his tendency to deny that God is intelligent Mind is no necessary part of the definitions and statements quoted above, and that the unity of God which the definitions

assume may perhaps have to be interpreted as a matter of reasonable belief rather than of fully established empirical knowledge. With these things understood, Wieman's formulations will be found valuable summary descriptions of some of the more important immanent aspects of divinely functioning reality.

##### 5. *The Divine as Conditioned by Human Behavior*

Divine values and values which are instrumental to the same are produced more effectively on condition of certain right adjustments of persons to the world and to each other. In other words, there is in the universe a divine-value-producing factor (which we may call God) which works more effectively toward the production of divine values on condition of scientific adjustment to the world, and intelligent, friendly cooperation on the part of human persons.

Professor Wieman's definitions, especially his earlier ones, give expression to this phase of the divine being and causality.

"God is precisely that object, whatever its nature may be, which will yield maximum security and abundance to all human living *when right adjustment is made*" (*Religious Experience and Scientific Method*, p. 381). "God is this most subtle and intimate complexity of environmental nature which yields the greatest good *when right adjustment is made*" (*The Wrestle of Religion with Truth*, p. vi).

"The great problem of human life is to provide those *connections, social, psychological, zoological, physical, chemical*, through which the integrative process of nature can fulfil itself most abundantly, for this is the value-making process called God." "God is the integrating process that arises out of the interaction of all these factors *when the right relations are established between them*." "God . . . is the progressive integration which spontaneously springs up in nature *whenever the right conditions are provided*" (*Religious Education*, December, 1928).

"It is man's chief business and high destiny to *establish connections between himself and other factors in nature*, and above all, connections between human individuals and groups, so that the constitutional tendency of the universe toward progressive integration can fulfil itself in the greatest possible values" (*Christian Century*, Feb. 14, 1929).

"God is that order of existence and possibility by virtue of which the greatest possible good is truly a possibility and can be achieved *by human effort*" (*The Issues of Life*, p. 162).

"God is always more than we can comprehend. But we can

always apprehend God if we meet the required conditions of self-commitment to the best that can be discovered in each concrete situation" (*The Growth of Religion*, p. 353).

#### 6. *The Divine as the Specifically Religious Object*

Up to the present we have used the term "divine" as connoting the ideal in the realm of the spiritual, and have predicated it of reality (whether human or cosmic) only as participating in or as potential of this quality. But the term is also used of a certain ultimately mysterious cosmic reality (power and presence), with reference to which man feels constrained to take a characteristically religious attitude of conscious dependence, awe and wonder, accompanied, it may be, by humiliation and eventual self-surrender, trust and devotion. This reality, apprehended as such in a common religious consciousness, religion tends to call the divine, or God, in the sense of the holy, or, to use Professor Rudolf Otto's more specific term, "the numinous" (Otto, *The Idea of the Holy*, Eng. tr., Oxford, 1923, 1928; *Religious Essays*, *ibid.*, 1931).

Harmonization of the two criteria of the divine, namely the ideally spiritual and the numinous, may be effected by taking the former as the objectively valid divine quality, and the latter as the subjectively apprehended. In the history of religion man has been gradually learning what it is that is objectively divine and particularly worthy of reverence as numinous, and it is significant that in advanced religion what is taken as the content of the divine character and will which should be regarded with numinous awe, is spiritual (*cf. Micah* 6:8). The distinction is analogous to that between the primary and the secondary, or sense-qualities of things. In ethical theistic religion, God, as the reality to which religious adjustment is made, is at once numinous and, as experience shows, a spiritually potential object.

#### 7. *The Divine as Conditioned by the Right Religious Adjustment*

The divine-value-producing factor in the universe (God) works most effectively for the production of divine value, other things being equal, on condition of a certain right specifically religious adjustment. There is specifically religious adjustment which is futile, because mistaken, either as to the ends for which religious adjustment can be immediately effective or in the choice of ways and means of seeking the religious experience. Moreover, there are types of religious experience which tend to interfere with achievement of socially valuable ends. But it is otherwise in religion at its best. The right religious adjustment includes concentration of attention not only upon spiritual and especially moral ends, but also upon God (thought of as divine-value-producing factor in the universe, and ordinarily as identified in some intimate way with the awe-inspiring "numinous" reality) as a dependable source of help

toward the realization of the spiritual ideal; self-surrender to God; an appropriating faith in the present help of this divine factor; active response to the appeal of the moral ideal under the inspiration of this faith, and persistence in all this long enough and wholeheartedly enough to bring the desired result or its equivalent. From the point of view of the resultant experience (spiritual achievement through right religious adjustment) God is the factor which responds dependably to the right religious adjustment, and the right religious adjustment is consciously intended to be adjustment to this specifically religious object, God.

Especially in his earlier expressions of position, Professor Wieman gives some signs of recognizing, however vaguely, this important and indeed central aspect of divine reality.

"God is necessarily that Object, however unknown, which must bring human life to maximum abundance, when man makes *proper adjustment to Him*" (*Religious Experience and Scientific Method*, p. 75).

"God is . . . that character of events to which man must adjust himself in order to attain the greatest goods and avoid the greatest ills," "that Something, however unknown, which would and which does bring human life to the largest fulfilment *when proper adjustment is made to it*" (*The Wrestle of Religion with Truth*, pp. 14, 59).

"The process of integration . . . will not lift man to the great goods of life unless men make *right adaptation to it*" (*Methods of Private Religious Living*, p. 52).

"God as [the] total system of patterns constituting supreme good . . . responds to prayer and is precisely what answers prayer, when prayer is answered" (*Is There a God?* p. 15).

"Prayer is an indispensable requirement for the attainment of the great goods of life, . . . [although] there may be many things we want which we cannot get by prayer; and many other conditions and procedures may be needed along with prayer" (*Normative Psychology of Religion*, p. 143).

Recently, however, strange as it may seem, Wieman has expressed the opinion that "the day of the centrality of religious experience has passed." Whether it be true or not that there is in general today, as he claims, "a turning away from the theology of religious experience," it seems to be true enough in his own particular case (*Christendom*, Summer, 1937, pp. 497f; *The Growth of Religion*, 1938, p. 424).

It is under this head that certain preliminary definitions of God offered from time to time by the present writer have their special place. Whereas Wieman seeks definitions of God on the basis of which everyone

will have to admit the divine existence, I have been interested mainly in a more specific definition, on the basis of which not necessarily everyone, but everyone of adequate religious experience, can be, without argument, assured of the existence of God in the sense of the still necessarily very broad definition of the term. While making use of a few definitions with which Wieman would presumably agree, such as "the ultimate Object of religious dependence" and "the necessary objective factor in experimental religion" (*Theology as an Empirical Science*, Macmillan, 1919, pp. 27, 90), most of my definitions preliminary to the development of an empirically grounded theology make specific reference to religious experience. The following are fairly typical:

"A power which makes for a certain type of result in response to the right religious adjustment" (*Op. cit.*, pp. 31, 32. The "right religious adjustment" is defined as including spiritual aspiration, concentration of attention upon God, whole-hearted self-surrender to God, and appropriating faith in divine spiritual power, responsiveness to what is taken as the divine will, and persistence in this specifically religious attitude. It will be seen that the right religious adjustment includes, for sinful man, the change of will called repentance, as well as faith. *Ibid.*, p. 144; *The Reasonableness of Christianity*, Scribners, 1925, pp. 236-237).

"A Factor in Absolute Reality upon which man can depend to produce, in response to the proper religious adjustment, a certain needed religious experience, . . . an uplift toward the ideal, especially the moral ideal, and an inner preparedness for anything that can befall" (*Theology as an Empirical Science*, p. 95); "a Power not identifiable with ourselves, that makes for righteousness in and through us when we persist in the right religious adjustment" (*The Reasonableness of Christianity*, p. 128); "the God of ultimately successful religious dependence, the dependable Factor, making for moral salvation and spiritual achievement, especially on condition of the right religious adjustment, whose existence is proved in experimental religion at its best" (*Ibid.*, p. 131); "an existent Being, or Power, at least one in number, accessible to man in religious experience, favorable to man's spiritual well-being, at least adequate to be the objective religious Factor involved in the experience of religious salvation to the extent that the experience has been realized, and responding dependably to the right religious adjustment" (*The Methodist Quarterly Review*, No. 274, April, 1927, p. 215). "On condition of such an adjustment, Reality or



some Factor in reality (whatever it may be and however it may be related to the human mind, conscious, unconscious, or sub-conscious) produces in the spiritual experience of the individual a difference which lies in the direction of the spiritual ideal. This Factor, whether we know anything more about it or not, is really existent and the God of experimental religion" (*My Idea of God*, edited by J. Fort Newton, Little, Brown, 1926, p. 146; *The Journal of Religion*, VI, 1926, p. 463. In my contribution to this symposium I undertook to point out various aspects of the Divine which should be kept in mind in any attempted comprehensive definition of what God is. The same article appeared in the *Journal of Religion*, VI, 1926, pp. 457-471).

In my later preliminary definition of God, I incorporated the essentials of Wieman's definition, along with my own. In my article in *Religious Realism* will be found what is intended to be a cumulative definition of what God can be *known* to be:

"The value-producing factor and behavior in the universe, driving toward right adjustment on man's part, even if he does not cooperate or opposes it at first, tending to force him to the method of trial and error, or self-correction and success—this is a divine reality, whether it be one or many, personal, impersonal, or superpersonal. . . . Taking together the divine factor driving from without, directly and indirectly, toward truth, goodness, and other divine ideals, and the divine factor driving through conscience toward the same ends, we may say that God is . . . a reality or factor . . . immanent in the processes of producing universally and permanently valid values; . . . a factor that works more successfully on condition of man's scientific adjustment to the world and his conscientious, friendly and intelligent adjustment to his fellows; . . . the factor which responds dependably to persistence in the right specifically religious adjustment . . . by promoting goodness of will and effectiveness in its activity, with such other phases of specific religious experience at its best (emotional, intellectual, physiological, social and distinctively religious) as are incidental to the fundamental experience" (*Religious Realism*, Macmillan, 1931, pp. 395, 396, 397, 400).

### 8. *Religious Realism*

While religious consciousness and appreciation condition certain subjective religious values and may facilitate certain divine processes in

human life, it remains true that there are divine processes and a divine factor which exist without being wholly dependent upon such consciousness and appreciation for their reality.

In view of the *theoretical* permissibility of solipsism, and other slightly less fantastic forms of subjective idealism, with regard to things in general, the religious person may, however grudgingly, admit a similar theoretical possibility of the truth of religious subjectivism. But to make such an admission is a far cry indeed from granting that such a negative faith is necessary or even reasonable. For a person who is living a physical life in daily and hourly adjustment to physical things, oftentimes to things which at the beginning of the adjustment transcend his direct experience, or to transcendent aspects of experienced things, and all this with generally satisfactory results, to be asked to deny the transcendent reality of the physical world would rightly seem ridiculous. To any person of common sense, even if he should concede that such transcendence may not be absolutely indubitable, theoretically speaking, it is, nevertheless, practically speaking, about as indubitable as his own existence or that of other persons. He *knows*, he will insist, a great deal about physical reality which transcends his immediate experience at the time; in fact he knows many of the laws of physical happening. And who shall say that this is not a legitimate use of the term knowledge, even in the sense of our definition, given above?

The person of normal (not necessarily average) religious experience is in a like position. As the other, in living the physical life, normally and indeed inevitably comes to be adequately, and in a way that is adequately critical, certain of transcendent physical reality, so the person who is living the religious life with anything like adequate religious experience normally and all but inevitably comes to be practically certain of divine reality, process and power, transcending the immediate religious experience of the moment. The religious expert has had dealings with a responding divine reality, and even though he may be unable to demonstrate by deductive argument to the inadequately experienced religious doubter the reality of transcendent aspects of the divine as potentially and causally related to experienced divine processes, he is, from a practical point of view, certain that he knows a transcendent divinely functioning reality and that he has learned through experience, his own and that of others, a good deal about the ways of that divine power. And who shall gainsay his right to use the term knowledge, as we have defined it, in this religious realm, even if he may sometimes go too far and claim as knowledge some things which are only more or less reasonable religious beliefs?

It may be, for instance, that the essentially spiritual or personal character of the transcendent, divinely functioning reality is reasonable

belief, rather than knowledge, and perhaps the same statement will apply to the unity of that reality in anything more than a functional sense. But this does not mean that the most reasonable course would be to *deny* (with Dewey in *The Christian Century*, May 31, 1933; and with B. E. Meland, in *Modern Man's Worship*, Harpers, 1934, Chs. XI, XII, and in *The Christian Century*, May 31, 1933) that the divinely functioning reality is organically or even consciously one. (But Mr. Wieman ought, I think, to recognize that our assurance of the unity of God, in any sense involving more than functional unity, working *as if* one, is reasonable faith, not knowledge, and, I would add, I think he might, without violating his empirical principles, come to see and admit that believing in God as essentially personal—conscious, intelligent, and morally purposive—may also be a reasonable faith.)

It is not claimed here that we *know* that we know, either the physical or the religious object, but only that we may very *reasonably believe* that we know an ordinarily largely transcendent physical world through our intermittent sense-experience, and that the religious expert likewise may very reasonably believe that he knows, through religious experience, a religious object, a divine reality, which is ordinarily largely transcendent, but that can and will, especially on occasion of the right religious adjustment, give adequate evidence of its existence and causal efficacy. Epistemology claims to be no more than the most reasonable *theory* as to the validity of human knowledge, but that does not mean that it is thereby required to hold to agnosticism with reference to independently existing reality in general.

#### 9. *Monistic Realism in Religion*

In certain phases of human experience, and particularly in religious experience at its best, divine reality (divine processes and a divine factor) is presented with sufficient immediacy to make possible for man a genuine acquaintance with (experiential knowledge of) that divine reality. We apprehend, intuit, perceive, a divine factor causally immanent in the complex of value-producing processes in the universe, and especially in the complex of religious experience at its best. In other words, we make empirical discovery of a divine reality, or a divine reality is *revealed*. We also make genuine acquaintance with a numinous presence in the universe, and this numinous presence overlaps, to a certain extent, or is at least partially identical with, the divine reality which we discover in the complex of religious experience which accompanies persistence in the right religious adjustment.

From the point of view of our definition of the term "divine," there need be no hesitation in accepting the idea of divine revelation in the sense of the experienced and experienceable immanence of divine

values in humanity. But there is the further question of the revelation, or causal immanence within the field of human experience and observation, of transcendently existing divine reality. Is there a reality, divine in quality and function, which transcends to some extent all of which man can have experience, and yet some of whose independently real aspects may on occasion come to be immanent within our experience in such a way as to be revealed to us, discovered and known by us? That this question should be answered in the affirmative may be reasonably believed. In other words, monistic realism in religious epistemology is the theory defended here as true. As we have said already, this theory of religious knowledge is not presented here as being itself knowledge, but as being a reasonable belief, and indeed one which we should be willing to defend as more reasonable than any of its alternatives, whether any of the varieties of epistemological idealism in religion which we have already examined, or the dualistic and logically agnostic realism which we have yet to investigate in detail.

If the question be as to how this revelation or discovery of independently existing divine reality takes place, it may be admitted that here certainly no less than elsewhere there is mystery surrounding creative activity and the emergence of novelty and concerning conscious awareness of divine or any other kind of reality; but if the question be interpreted as referring to a criterion or criteria by which immanent divine reality is recognized as such, the answer must be in terms of divine value, and not alone in such purely existential terms as that of causal efficacy. That is divine (in some sense at least) which divinely does, that is, which acts in such a way as to merit our absolute reverence and devotion. In other words, the criterion of the divine, assuming causal efficacy as the mark of existence, is of necessity valuational, and furthermore, spiritual and ideal, as intrinsically worthy of our absolute self-surrender and worship.

Mere numinousness, or awe-inspiring quality and the like, is by itself an insufficient criterion of revelation of the divine. It is, to be sure, a mark of what is taken as manifestation of the divine, especially in primitive religion; but not exclusively there, as the philosopher's reverent awe in contemplating "the starry heavens above and the moral law within" would indicate. But there is a good deal of subjectivity, not to say ignorance, commonly associated with the feeling of numinousness; what inspires awe and shuddering dread may be little more than the "uncanny," and suggestive at least as much of the diabolical as of the divine. Numinousness may be regarded as a sort of permanent subjective religious form which is not always filled with or fitted on to its true objective content, namely, the really and specifically divine. The truly divine is the spiritually ideal, and this it is which is the true criterion

of the genuineness of all that claims to be revelation of the specifically divine. Manifestation of mere power might arouse feelings of dread and awe, but only the ideally true or beautiful or good, or something equally spiritual, can command our reverent and willing devotion. The manifestation of cosmic power may be religiously apprehended as the habitual behavior of the divine Body, but it can be so taken only as manifesting in its processes a divinely rational and dependable order. Miracle, in the sense of a supposed arbitrary breach of such order, could not in itself and apart from any consideration of appreciable value be reasonably taken as the criterion of revelation of the divine.\* As manifestation of causally efficacious reality revelation is existential, but, assuming that, the adequate criterion of its being revelation of the *divine* reality is valuational, and, as valuational, not merely numinous, but spiritual and ideal.† *True* holiness is not mere numinousness, awe-inspiring quality associated with particular times and places and physical things and events; its realm is that of heart and mind and will.

"He wills that I should holy be,  
What can withstand His will?" (C. Wesley)

Here we have the numinous in proper association with the spiritually ideal.

Objection is sometimes made to any association of the term "discovery" with the idea of divine revelation. Man is finite and cannot as such attain to the Infinite, it is asserted. There is no way from man to God, we are told, but only from God to man; so that if there is to be revelation, it must be wholly of the divine initiative. But just here the analogy of sense-perception may be instructive. There could be no revelation or discovery of the physical world to our senses, if nature did not take the initiative and stimulate our sense-organs; but neither could there be any discovery or consequently any revelation of the world to us, if we did not open our eyes and unstop our ears and direct our attention in some degree to that externally originated stimulus. So too, there must be the stimulus of divinely functioning reality for there to be valid religious revelation, but there must also be the responsive religious consciousness if the potential revelation involved in the divine initiative is actually to "get across" to man and be consciously discovered. To make revelation depend solely upon God is, in view of its unequal realization in all lives, to introduce an element of untrustworthy arbitrariness into the supposedly divine reality in which we are invited to believe. The

\* "Miracles! Fiddlestick! Are not you a miracle to your horse? What can they prove?" (Thomas Carlyle).

† Cf. my article, "Theology, Valuational or Existential?" in the *Review of Religion*, November, 1939, replying to H. R. Niebuhr's criticisms of this position.

sun may shine and its light be reflected from natural objects even when we take no note of them and so learn nothing of them, and it is not otherwise in the religious realm. The divine initiative is unceasing and adequate to bring us to religious experience and understanding, were we but adequately attentive and responsive to the divine stimulus. Without at least the beginning of religious response on our part, revelation does not become actual. No *potential* revelation, however real and however great it may be as historic or contemporary fact, can become *actual* revelation to us without this response.

#### 10. *Critical Monistic Realism in Religion*

Not all that enters into direct religious experience is to be regarded as belonging to the divine reality in its independent existence, nor is what is directly experienced of the divine to be taken as all there is of the divine in reality. On the one hand, for instance, there are elements (whether attractive or repellent) in the religious object as it appears to the numinous consciousness which are probably at least colored by subjectivity; and on the other hand, the emergence or production of divine values involves a potentiality of the divine which is explained only in terms of a divine (divinely potential) reality. There is, however, a partial identity or over-lapping of the divine as immediately experienced and the divine as independently real. This coincidence or identity is sufficiently extensive for the possibility of verifying at least some of our ideas as to that reality.

Many writers on mysticism, who, if not mystics themselves, are at least pro-mystical in their sympathies, have claimed for religion in general, although in weak, diluted form, something of that intuitive knowledge of God which the great mystics have claimed with such assurance for themselves. If we are "conscious of a Reality which transcends the normal world of sense," we are, Evelyn Underhill assures us, "one and all kindred of the mystics," the true goal of whose experience is "intuitive contact with the ultimate reality which theologians mean by the Godhead and philosophers by the Absolute" (*Mysticism*, Dutton, 1912, pp. 532, 534; *The Essentials of Mysticism*, Dutton, 1920, p. 20). According to Rufus M. Jones, the mystical experience is the spiritually sensitized soul's "leap of intuition," by which he gains, as he claims with great assurance, "direct experience of God," "a first hand conviction that God is near at hand and directly operating." "We have no way of *proving*," it is confessed, that the mystic's insights truly correspond with the eternal reality of God; but at any rate they have for the mystic the "same feeling of objectivity" which attaches to our cognitive experience in general (*Fundamental Ends of Life*, Macmillan, 1924, pp.

106, 113, 114; *Pathways to the Reality of God*, Macmillan, 1931, pp. 41, 42, 44; *The Testimony of the Soul*, Macmillan, 1936, pp. 202, 208).

W. E. Hocking accepts as valid experiential knowledge and undertakes to defend philosophically the mystic's claimed direct experience of God as being an immediate intuition of Absolute Reality, or the Whole, as Other Mind (*The Meaning of God in Human Experience*, Yale Univ. Press, 1912, Part IV). The late Charles A. Bennett, identifying the mystical intuition as one of those experiences "in which the solving idea 'dawns on' one," was of the opinion that when the mystic says he has found God, "he has a right to his certainty" (*A Philosophical Study of Mysticism*, Yale Univ. Press, 1923, pp. 101, 109). Dean W. R. Matthews, less mystically inclined perhaps, and more committed to authoritative external standards, than the others, yet claims for the religious soul an "immediate intuition" of "the Beyond that is akin" (*God in Christian Experience*, Harpers, 1930, pp. 9, 10). There is in all these writers a lingering vagueness as to whether the religious expert has or has not as genuine knowledge of the divine as the ordinary plain observer has of the physical world. What, we think, might be said but generally is not said, is that in successful religious experience there is empirical *knowledge* of a divinely functioning reality, which may be reasonably *believed* to be "akin" and "Other Mind," and an adequate object of religious worship and trust.

Among the "pro-mystical" writers on mysticism, the late Baron von Hügel may be classed as a critical monistic realist in religion, although, as has been not unjustly said by a careful and sympathetic student of his writings, there is a "lack of a detailed, technical epistemology," and it would seem that he "never scrutinized his own realism too closely" (A. H. Dakin, *Von Hügel and the Supernatural*, S.P.C.K., 1934, pp. 17, 41). But the Baron was very level-headed, and his heart was in the right place. He was convinced, without much argument, that in our experience we are normally in touch with reality, that we have some real experience and knowledge of ourselves and of objects, of each in and through the other, and that in religion at its higher reaches there is real contact with Superhuman Reality. Nothing real is known by us exhaustively, but in the complex cognitive experience we know the thing "without further mediation," i.e. directly, or, in the sense of epistemological monism, immediately. So too it was his faith that man experiences God none the less truly because always piecemeal, imperfectly, not always equally, never in this life except on occasion of the experience of other reality, and never without an element of subjective interpretation on the part of the religious subject (*The Mystical Element of Religion*, 1908, 2nd ed., Dutton, 1923, Vol. I, p. xvi; Vol. II, p. 372; *Eternal Life*, Scribners, 1912, p. 153; *Essays and Addresses*, 1st

Series, Dutton, 1921, pp. 52, 63, 66; 2nd Series, Dutton, 1926, p. 246; *The Reality of God*, Dutton, 1934, pp. 3, 6, 14, 15, 33, 71, 139, 140, 143. Cf. Dakin, *op. cit.*, and L. V. Lester-Garland, *The Religious Philosophy of Baron F. von Hügel*, Dutton, 1933, pp. 32, 33).

Since the publication, a few years ago, of his book entitled *The Two Sources of Morality and Religion* (Eng. tr., Holt, 1935), it has been manifest that the famous Henri Bergson belongs, broadly speaking, among those whom we have called monistic realists in religion. This fact was already known, however, to those who had conversed with the philosopher himself on the subject. It has long been his position that the true metaphysical method is an immediate intuition or vision of reality, and that in religious mysticism there is such an immediate intuition (*An Introduction to Metaphysics*, Eng. tr., Putnam, 1912; *The Biblical World*, Jan. 1913, p. 36). But we may ask, is the intuition which he advocates of the type here called perceptual, or is it of the merely imaginal variety? Is his intuitionism extreme and unduly dogmatic, or is it adequately critical? We are especially interested here in the answer to these questions in so far as they have application to religion and affect the conception of God.

What Bergson has to say—and it is much—concerning mind and mind-energy, time as experienced duration, free will, and creativity in evolution, leads to the conviction that the intuition of which he speaks is no mere subjective impression as to the nature of inaccessible reality, but immediate contemplation of reality experienced as present; in other words, it is perceptual intuition. Moreover his emphasis has been widely appreciated as marking a much needed reaction against the deadening rationalism and ultra-intellectualism and determinism of late nineteenth-century philosophy. In his last great work he undertakes to apply his epistemological principles in the philosophy of morality and religion. The social values of habit and conformity are recognized, but here again the weight of Bergson's emphasis is clearly on the side of freedom, spontaneity, immediacy, change, and creativity. In *Creative Evolution*, Bergson had tended to identify God with the creative cosmic Life-Force. "God . . . has nothing of the already made; He is unceasing life, action, freedom" (*Op. cit.*, Eng. tr., Holt, 1911, p. 248; cf. pp. 265, 266). His last major work views creative morality and religion as the effect, in large part, of mystical experience, with the God of mystic intuition variously described as creative Energy, creative Love, present and "acting through the soul in the soul." Even beyond man, "the creative effort which life itself manifests" is regarded as being "of God, if it is not God himself" (*The Two Sources of Morality and Religion*, Eng. tr., pp. 209, 219, 220, 240, 243).

As he proceeds further with the development of his idea of God it



becomes evident that Bergson treads with less assured step. Here it is confessed that from a critical point of view what philosophy can do, even with the light which mystical intuition can throw upon the subject, is "in the field of probabilities alone." "Mystical experience, left to itself, cannot provide the philosopher with complete certainty" (*Ibid.*, pp. 236, 244-245, 250, 251). Moreover, mystical intuition is generally found in a diluted form, a mere "fringe, vague and evanescent, still lingering around intelligence" (*Ibid.*, pp. 201, 202). Bergson thus seems to have come to recognize, under a different terminology, the distinction between perceptual intuition, yielding knowledge at its best, and mere imaginal intuition, fruitful for life and thought, but not carrying us beyond faith and surmise. Viewed as a whole, however, Bergson's epistemology remains a rather dogmatic monistic realism, and in appraising his contributions it will not do to forget that he carried the needed reaction against extreme intellectualism and rationalism to an equally objectionable irrationalism and anti-conceptualism at or very near to the opposite extreme.

According to Professor Norman Kemp Smith, while we cannot demonstrate the existence of God by argument, we attach what positive value we do to the theistic arguments simply because, prior to all argument, the religious man is so assured of the existence of God and of his providence that contrary arguments and even what may look like contrary events leave that assurance unshaken. In Kemp Smith's opinion, the religious man has a right to his belief in God, for the reason that he has had and continues to have an immediate experience of the Divine. "We never experience the Divine sheerly in and by itself," he admits; "we experience the Divine solely through and in connection with what is other than the Divine"; but this, he claims, is, as in our experience of other selves, not independently of bodily actions, and yet, for all that, as immediately as we experience ourselves (*Is Divine Existence Credible?* Humphrey Milford, 1931, pp. 5, 20-22, etc.).

Beyond this somewhat dogmatic general statement of an epistemologically monistic and realistic religious position, Professor Kemp Smith does not carry us far, but what he has said does not conflict, I think, at least as doctrine, with what I have here called *critical* monistic realism in religion. With reference to "adequately critical certitude," however, it seems to leave something to be desired which is perhaps not altogether unattainable. One would like to have the view further elucidated and elaborated, so as to show that the appeal is not to a mere subjective, *imaginal* intuition or feeling, but to a critically tested *perceptual* religious intuition, a verifiable objective presence, revelation and discovery, under specific conditions, of a divinely functioning reality.

Much the same thing may be said of the religious epistemology of

Professor John Baillie in its most recent phase (*Our Knowledge of God*, Scribners, 1939). In earlier works, after the manner of Kant, but more circumspectly perhaps, arguing on the basis of the moral consciousness, he sought to avoid, at least in its practical implications, the religious agnosticism which, as we shall contend more definitely in Part IV following, is logically involved in the Kantian dualistic religious epistemology which Baillie apparently had already in large measure accepted (*The Roots of Religion in the Human Soul*, Doran, 1926; *The Interpretation of Religion*, Scribners, 1928, Part II, Chs. V-VII). Any attempt to demonstrate the existence of God by argument is now rejected as not only futile but as needless and even suspect (*Our Knowledge of God*, pp. 107-112, 128-133, 138, 140-143, 175-177). We have religious knowledge by direct confrontation with what is variously designated as "the transcendent holiness of God," "the divine," "the reality of God," "the living God," "the challenge of his holy presence," "the challenge of God in Christ," "the self-revelation of the divine personality," "the continual invasion of our life by his holy presence" (*Ibid.*, pp. 3, 6, 8, 17, 126, 132, 143, 148, 155, 166, 174, 175, 196f.). Not only are the religious thus confronted with God; even as the subjective idealist is directly confronted with the physical world, and the solipsist with other selves, in spite of their negative doctrines, so is the atheist confronted with the reality of God and forced to believe in God "in the bottom of his heart," even while he is honestly denying God "with the top of his mind" (*Ibid.*, p. 51, 52, 68, 72, 94, etc.).

In spite of the frequent emphatic repetition of this thought, with its obvious epistemologically monistic and realistic intent, there remains some ambiguity as to whether the monistic realism is sufficiently elaborated in detail to be clearly adequately critical, or whether it remains fundamentally dogmatic. In interpreting Baillie's religious epistemology, the fact should not be overlooked that his theological teacher, Herrmann of Marburg, also spoke of an encounter with God, that many of his expressions are strongly suggestive of a direct or monistic realism as being the true theory of religious knowledge, and that nevertheless in the end Herrmann seems most truly classifiable with regard to this question as an essentially dualistic Kantian (W. Herrmann, *Communion with God*, 1st Eng. tr., pp. 17, 22, 24; *Systematic Theology*, Macmillan, 1927, pp. 35-39). To be more specific with regard to Baillie's views, the question is whether the confrontation of the soul with the divine reality is in what we have called imaginal intuition, a strong feeling of the reality of an unperceived presence, or on the other hand, a perceptual intuition, verifying and making objective our knowledge of the reality of the divine. There is strong suggestion of the latter, and of a duly critical monistic realism as well, in such statements as that it is

in a "mediated immediacy" and "in conjunction with the presence of our fellows and of the corporeal world" that God presents himself to us (*Ibid.*, pp. 178f., 181, 185, 189). This looks like what we have called perceptual intuition, perception of a reality in a complex of sensory and other elements distinguishable from it. On the other hand the analogy of our intuition of other selves, of which so much is made (*Ibid.*, Ch. V), is not developed in such a way as to identify it as clearly a case of perceptual intuition, as distinguished from a merely imaginal intuition which happens in most instances to be true. It is admitted that an inferential element is involved in identifying a particular self as being a self, and not a mere illusory subjective impression, as well as in the interpretation of the inner character of other selves from their bodily behavior (*Ibid.*, p. 212). But of God it is claimed that we know not only his reality but his personality, goodness, infinity, eternity, omniscience and omnipotence, not by inference but by direct acquaintance; these are attributes which we find in the Divine Reality which confronts us (*Ibid.*, pp. 250-252, 258). Is not this an exaggerated claim, which throws the whole position under the suspicion of being unduly dogmatic, because *at the bottom of his mind* Baillie is still essentially dualistic and logically agnostic?

Would it not be better to claim knowledge of a divinely functioning reality or factor in perceived process, introducing the concepts of personality and the rest as elements of faith and more or less reasonable interpretation? How can we discover and know the infinity, eternity, omniscience and omnipotence of God, especially if our being confronted with God does not even mean that we have *experience* of divine reality, but only that we are in relation to God? (*Ibid.*, p. 223. But only three pages further on Professor Baillie quotes with seeming full approval the opinion of Professor de Burgh, that our knowledge of God's existence and of that of our fellow-man "is founded on the experience of their presence." *Ibid.*, p. 226.) From our point of view Professor Baillie's vigorous defence of a presentational realism in religion is welcome and for the most part valuable as far as it goes, but it needs to be worked out more thoroughly in its epistemological details. In Baillie's case, it is the voice which is the voice of an epistemological monist, while the hands seem to remain those of the dualist. Is he seeking thus to win for himself an equal right to share in the religious knowledge which *logically* is the birthright of the monistic religious realist alone?

The very considerable value of Professor John Oman's contribution to contemporary thought on the subject before us has been less widely appreciated than it deserves to have been, perhaps partly because of the prominence he gives to that badly worn and increasingly ambiguous term, "the supernatural." The expression is too negative and too suggestive of

arbitrary miracle to be the best available word for what he has in mind, which he distinguishes not only from the miraculous but also from the creatively free (*The Natural and the Supernatural*, Macmillan, 1931, p. 72). He would have done better, it seems to me, if he had used the term we have been using in this chapter, namely, the divine.

With this translation of Oman's leading term, however, we find ourselves in close agreement with much of what he has to say. (This will immediately be so evident that it may not be out of place or without interest to say that all of the numbered paragraphs in the present chapter had been worked out independently and were already in typewritten form before Professor Oman's book from which we now quote was first published in 1931.) Religion's special concern, according to Oman, is with the Supernatural (or as I would say, the divine), and yet, he insists, religion is "an actual experience of an actual environment" (*Op. cit.*, pp. 57, 71; cf. pp. 2, 3, 23).

Religion is interested in "worth of a kind different from all others," and has its "conviction of a peculiar kind of reality" (*Ibid.*, p. 58). The term "holy"\* Oman uses for "the direct sense or feeling of the Supernatural," and the term "sacred" "for its valuation as of absolute worth" (*Ibid.*, p. 59). "The sacred . . . just means absoluteness of value, that which is of incomparable worth" (*Ibid.*, p. 65). "Valuation as sacred is the mark of religion. . . . Everything that is sacred is [rightly] in the sphere of religion, and everything in the sphere of religion is [supposedly] sacred . . . But the sphere of religion [in the full sense of the word] is not the value or the feeling or both, but the environment known by means of them . . . The supernatural world is known by the sense of the holy and its sacred or absolute values; and for practical purposes, the distinction between the Natural and the Supernatural is between comparative value and absolute" (*Ibid.*, p. 69). "In the end the validity of religion depends on the reality . . . of the Supernatural" (*Ibid.*, p. 71). Man's "supreme task . . . has been to *discover* the true Supernatural," not to prove by argument "that it exists." "The Supernatural must be inquired into, like the Natural, as a world in which we live and move and have our being, if it is to be inquired into with profit" (*Ibid.*, p. 72). "Unless theology is, like true science, about experience [about divine reality discovered in and through experience] and not in place of it, it is worthless" (*Ibid.*, p. 97). "Its business is the interpretation of facts"† (*Ibid.*, p. 110).

\* Rudolf Otto's doctrine of "the holy" might well be considered here, but, combined as it is with a Kantian-Friesian point of view, it seems better to reserve it for discussion under dualistic realism, Part IV.

† The words in square brackets are the present writer's interpretive insertions, and with the statements thus understood he feels himself in close accord with what Professor Oman is saying.

Dr. F. E. England, in his valuable work, *The Validity of Religious Experience* (London, 1937), while warmly appreciative of Oman's analysis of the religious experience, finds unsatisfactory his statement that "we know the Supernatural as it reflects itself in the sense of the holy, and it has for us absolute value directly and without further argument" (Oman, *op. cit.*, p. 72; England, *op. cit.*, pp. 195-199). Professor Oman is, at this point, a bit too dogmatic. His view that no demonstration of the reality of the supernatural environment is required, provided we define it aright, is valid only of the divine as *valid* and as *immanent*, not of the "supernatural" as a transcendently existing realm of realized absolute values, or absolutely perfect being. Obviously, mere subjective conviction carries no guarantee of objective reality. There is point in the criticism that Oman's position calls for a metaphysical support which he has not supplied (England, *op. cit.*, p. 199). Still, we would maintain, Oman's immediate empirical realism in religion is *defensible*, metaphysically as well as epistemologically. Dr. England's own dualistic epistemology, according to which "the only kind of immediate experience or direct acquaintance with reality open to mortals is the *Erlebnis* or enjoyment of our own states of awareness" (*Ibid.*, p. 197; *cf.* p. 71) is one whose descent into agnosticism is logically inevitable; no possible speculative metaphysics concerning the unexperienced and unexperienceable can suffice to transform subjective intuition into objective knowledge. If Oman is an epistemological dualist, England's suggestion of a metaphysical theology will not save the day for religious *knowledge*; if, however, he is what our chosen excerpts would seem to indicate, namely, a direct or monistic realist, his position is the more tenable of the two, the one more likely to find its less urgently needed metaphysical support. As we shall see in the case of Schleiermacher, so in the case of Dr. England, overt agnosticism is avoided, in so far as it is escaped at all, only at the cost of a virtual adoption of an essentially pantheistic view (*Ibid.*, pp. 273-282).

One more recent statement of position may be included, as apparently intended for an adequately critical direct or monistic realism in religion, even though it too seems infected with what, if not an ultimate ambiguity, is a logical unsatisfactoriness in its doctrine of religious intuition. I refer to the views of Professor E. W. Lyman ("Can Religious Intuition Give Knowledge of Reality?" in *Religious Realism*, ed. by D. C. Macintosh, Macmillan, 1931; *The Meaning and Truth of Religion*, Scribners, 1933, esp. Ch. IX, a chapter which shows the influence of W. P. Montague's *The Ways of Knowing*, Allen and Unwin, 1925, Ch. II). On the whole what is meant by "religious intuition" seems not to be verifiable perception in a complex of other empirical processes and elements, but rather what we have called "imaginal intuition." It

is claimed that intuition is "a direct vision of truth" (*The Meaning and Truth of Religion*, p. 205), but on the next page it is rightly admitted that "intuitions are not infallible," that feeling of certainty is not proof of certainty. Intuition is said to be "a significant way of knowing," and yet it is granted that it is not self-validating. While it has "the swiftness and directness of perception" (*Ibid.*, p. 206), and while it is reasonably claimed that religion may promote a valid perceptive intuition of the unique human individual (*Ibid.*, pp. 212-215), it is admitted that what is meant by *religious* intuition is a certitude which itself stands in need of the tests of reason and "subsequent verification" (*Ibid.*, pp. 203-208, 215, 219, 223).

Now as for the test of intuition by reason it needs to be understood and remembered that the mere "rationalizing" of imaginal intuitions which are not only confessedly "not infallible" but more than half of which, if the truth were known, would probably be found to be mistaken, with more than half of the remainder half-mistaken, is very far from transforming the original intuition into knowledge, or even necessarily into truly reasonable belief. It is indeed true that creative imaginal intuition may be immensely fruitful in leading to new "trial and error" processes and in helping toward "subsequent verification"—or refutation. But the rationalizing of subjective "hunches" is not objective verification. It is *perceptual* intuition of *reality* which has dependable verification-value, and this is what imaginal intuition of supposed truth needs far more than any mere premature rationalizing. Professor Lyman seems to me to be altogether too complaisant toward Professor Hocking's brilliant but fallacious argument for rationalistic idealism as empirically verified in mystical intuition and for the latter as rationally vindicated by the former (*Ibid.*, pp. 220-223). It would have been better to have made more of Montague's well-put warning that "the ideas and beliefs which are yielded by intuition should neither be discarded as false nor accepted as true, but taken tentatively as hypotheses which need to be tested by further experience, [and thus] be treated precisely like those ideas that are derived from the testimony of others—as suggestions which we are thankful to receive, but careful to substantiate" (*Op. cit.*, p. 64). Professor Lyman does give a passing nod of recognition to the claims of empirical "verification,"\* but what is thus named tends to peter out in the exposition into mere "coherence with the rest of experience" and a pragmatic regard for considerations of value. Both of these are trends in the right direction, but they do not necessarily amount to verification,

\* Cf. the rather crude and highly dogmatic anticipation of this idea in F. H. R. Frank's *System of the Christian Certainty* (Eng. tr., 1886), and certain vague but suggestive statements in L. F. Stearns, *The Evidence of Christian Experience* (Scribners, 1890, p. 18) and in W. N. Clarke, *What Shall We Think of Christianity?* (Scribners, 1899, p. 131).

for which what is supposed in the hypothesis (suggested, it may be, by imaginal intuition) is found in actual experience (perceptual intuition) to be as was supposed. Neither coherence with our very limited and fragmentary experience nor temporary usefulness for promoting appreciated values can be safely taken as amounting to verification in the scientific sense of the word.

#### 11. *Verification in Religion*

Some religious judgments may be tested scientifically (i.e., in an adequately critical, empirical way) by comparing what is affirmed in the judgment with what is directly experienced in relation to the divinely functioning reality to which religious adjustment is purposely made. As a result of this test some religious ideas will have to be rejected as not scientifically acceptable, while certain others will stand the test and may be regarded as forming a nucleus of empirically verified religious knowledge. The further elaboration and defense of this position must be reserved for the succeeding chapter.

## Chapter XII

### EMPIRICAL THEOLOGY

---

Theology was defined by the scholastics and is still defined by their successors as the "science of God." By this term has always been meant, however, a deductive science, proceeding from assumed premises, not an inductive empirical science in the more modern sense of the word. Occasionally, however, a theologian has played with the idea of making doctrinal or systematic theology scientific in this empirical sense. A generation ago a Canadian theologian, Dr. Nathaniel Burwash, brought out a theological manual claiming to proceed by the "inductive method." It turned out, however, that it assumed the external authority of the Scriptures, and simply undertook to arrive at its doctrinal conclusions by *generalizing* on the basis of *particular* Scriptural passages. What some others who have called for the use of scientific method have really recommended, in so far as they have gone beyond vague generalities, has been the employment of what we may call a non-scientific religious pragmatism. For example, in an article entitled "Can Theology Become Scientific?" published in the *Hibbert Journal* for April, 1911, M. M. Pattison Muir wrote: "Theologians speak of theology as a science; are they willing to advance their science by using the scientific method?" But it turns out that all he meant was, "Are they willing to measure the truthfulness of theological ideas by their values as aids to religious life?" (*Op. cit.*, p. 471.)\*

In his Nathaniel W. Taylor Lectures published in 1912 under the title, *Social Idealism and the Changing Theology* (Macmillan), Professor Gerald Birney Smith of the University of Chicago called for a change from the authoritative method to one apparently meant to be really scientific, in the following terms:

\* Cf. Henry Drummond, *Natural Law in the Spiritual World*; M. M. Pattison Muir, *Hibbert Journal*, IX, pp. 470-6; X, pp. 824-34; G. Tyrrell, *Through Scylla and Charybdis*, Longmans, 1907, p. 229, *Christianity at the Cross-Roads*, *Ibid.*, 1909, p. 251; F. C. S. Schiller, *Hibbert Journal*, IV, 1906, pp. 329-45; S. Mathews, *American Journal of Theology*, XIII, 1909, pp. 21-46; G. B. Smith, *Ibid.*, XIV, 1910, pp. 215-33; E. W. Lyman, in the *Garman Commemoration Volume*, Houghton Mifflin, 1910; H. A. Youtz, *Harvard Theological Review*, IV, 1911, pp. 439-59; J. W. Lee, *The Religion of Science*, Revell, 1912.



"The assurance of the theologian has rested on the possibility of affirming *the unchangeable truth of certain doctrines*. The assurance of the scientist rests on *the possibility of verifying or of revising all doctrines by the use of exact methods of research*."

"If scientific exactness of method . . . is essential in one realm, it is inevitable that the same attention to method shall be seen to be indispensable in other realms."

"An important consequence of modern scientific procedure is to free men from [the] sense of helpless dependence on antiquity. . . . If the books containing the *results* of scientific inquiry should all be lost, it would not seriously dismay the modern inquirer, *provided only the capacity to use the scientific method remained*. . . . The modern mind is concerned to attain such a mastery of *method* as to be able, if possible, to improve upon the past. . . . The man who has attained the scientific attitude is not afraid of the 'destruction' of anything. . . . He never thinks of demanding that a new hypothesis shall conform to traditional doctrines before it shall be allowed to prevail."

"There cannot be a wholesome revision of theology so long as the older type of religious assurance is insisted upon. For a theology which tries at the same time to preserve confidence in a finished system and to make use of scientific methods is hopelessly divided against itself."

"The newer type of religious experience . . . starts with the questioning mood rather than with the authoritative theories. . . . The religious life becomes an exercise of unceasing prayer. . . . Religious life is the quest for the reinforcement of our highest ideals by the spiritual contribution from the environing universe. The supreme question for theology is to discover how this environment may be so correlated to the needy life that the fullest possible use may be made of the divine power. . . . Theology must interpret for us [the] truth of the uplifting experience of the environing God" (*Op. cit.*, pp. 167, 171, 185-188, 237-239, 243).

In the same year (1912) Dr. Frederick Adams Woods, of the Faculty of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, published a pioneer work in the proposed new science of historiometry, undertaking to apply the statistical methods of science to historical causes and events. In this work he said,

"Although you cannot experiment with man as you do with lower animals, human history is in fact a storehouse of experiments, of which the results are recorded in some 400,000

volumes. If this mass of information were examined with the closeness and analyzed with the acuteness and systematic method which marks the pursuit of knowledge in the material sciences, we would surely derive from it guidance and enlightenment as to the causes of individual and national success and failure."

In April, 1914, I read a paper before the American Theological Society, entitled "Theology as an Empirical Science." The ideas presented were given the benefit of criticism by members of the Society present, and after five more years my book was published, under the same title as I had given my paper. Here was definitely undertaken the project somewhat vaguely suggested and desiderated by Professor Smith, and in the course of the next few years it was subjected to a certain amount of discussion and criticism in the more technical religious journals. Twelve years later, in my essay on "Experimental Realism in Religion," I made some suggestions with regard to the history of religion which may be regarded as having come within the bounds of the historiometry envisaged by Dr. Woods, to which reference has been made. I said:

"What we mean to say in advocating experimentalism as a theory of the genesis of religion is that religion is an integral part of man's experimental adjustment to reality for the promotion of values. . . . But . . . not only is the differentiation of religion from other phases of life to be interpreted in terms of experimental adjustment to reality for the promotion of values; the same thing is to be said of the differentiation which in the course of history has taken place within religion itself, namely, its differentiation into certain regional groupings of religions, into the various national and founded or international religions, and into religious sects and individual religious formations. All such differentiation may be considered as religious experimentation on the part of the human race. . . . In practical experimental religion . . . the distinctively religious interest [is] centered in the question of how to find a dependably effective and satisfactory adjustment to a divine reality or power, whether as means to other ends, or as an end in itself. . . . What the individual can do in the way of experimentation in religion, where inner sincerity is all-important, is decidedly limited; but here in the history of religion one has before his eyes the results of the race's experiments. Like all experimentation it has been a trial-and-error process, and here the amount of error, judged from any one point within the whole, has been immense; still one may learn much even from the mistakes which others have made.

"The results of experimentation in religion are to be seen not only in the differentiation of religions, but in religious progress as well. In the course of history religion has made progress . . . especially by building up a gradually growing body of knowledge, based upon experience, of just what it is as well as what it is not that religion is good for, that is, knowledge of what religion can be depended upon, under specific conditions, to accomplish." Magical, materialistic religion "was essentially prescientific, and much of its experimentation was bound to be discredited in time. . . . Man has been learning, slowly but surely, to depend upon divine power in the special ways characteristic of religion, . . . for such *effects* of true prayer in the life of the spirit (and through that, such other effects) as experience teaches him he may expect to obtain on condition of a definite type of religious adjustment. . . . Thus progressive experimental religion has been becoming at once more rational and more moral, more spiritual and more scientific" (*Religious Realism*, Macmillan, 1931, pp. 318-323).

In *Theology as an Empirical Science* and in some later writings\* I have repeatedly claimed that, on the basis of religious perception, or experimental revelation and discovery, such as has been described and evaluated as valid in the preceding chapter, it ought to be and indeed is possible to formulate empirical laws as to what a dependably and divinely functioning reality can be depended upon for, under stated specific conditions of religious adjustment. Empirical laws of religious experience, which, when stated in terms of the human subject's religious adjustment of a certain discoverably successful sort and its dependable consequences, would be laws of the normative psychology of religion, would be, when stated in terms of a divinely functioning reality's dependable response to such an adjustment on man's part, laws of empirical theology, i.e., laws of divine operation in human religious experience. And on the basis of such laws the divine reality could be defined, incompletely but with essentially scientific certainty, as that which responds in these specific ways to the specified religious adjustment.

This conception of the methodology of theology has been subjected to

\* See especially, *The Reasonableness of Christianity*, 1925, ch. XII; *The Methodist Quarterly Review*, April, 1927, pp. 202-218; *The Pilgrimage of Faith*, Calcutta, 1931, ch. IX; *Religious Realism*, 1931, pp. 329-383; *The Review of Religion*, May, 1939, pp. 383-399; November, 1939, pp. 23-44. Further references are the following: "Theology in a Scientific Age," in *Education for Christian Service*, Yale, 1922; "Religious Knowledge and Reasonable Faith," *Colgate-Rochester Divinity School Bulletin*, November, 1929; *Is There a God?*, Willett, Clark, 1932, 6th and 7th Cycles; "Romanticism or Realism, Which?" in *American Philosophies of Religion* (Wieman and Meland), Willett, Clark, 1936, pp. 325-332; *Religion in Life*, Summer, 1938, pp. 458-459.

considerable criticism.\* One of the criticisms most commonly made against the proposed scientific empirical theology is that its religious realism is dogmatic in *presupposing* "the real existence of God." In reply it might be maintained that the religious expert has the same *logical* right to presuppose it as the physicist has to presuppose the existence of electricity. *That* it is, is sufficiently sure on the basis of prescientific experience; scientific method is to be employed to find out more exactly just *what* it is.

This presupposing of the existence of the already experienced subject-matter of the special science in question is a part of the necessary dogmatism (from the philosophical point of view) of the special sciences. It is not an unscientific dogmatism, but scientific dogmatism. It is the business of philosophy, not of science, to examine into the necessary presuppositions of the special sciences. And of course it would be dogmatic for philosophy to presuppose the existence of God. A scientific empirical theology may examine the existence of a divine reality on the basis of the religious experience in which a divinely functioning reality is discovered. It remains for theology itself to formulate more definitely, *what* it is that is thus discovered; for religious epistemology to inquire into the validity of this supposed knowledge of God in religious experience; and for metaphysics to undertake a final critical examination, not only of what theology concludes concerning the nature of God, but also of the religious affirmation of the existence of God which has been included among the presuppositions of theology as an empirical science. Thus the answer to Wobbermin's criticism, that the question of truth is not adequately dealt with, is that theology as an empirical science is neither religious epistemology nor a final system of metaphysics. The empirical theologian

\* Among discussions of the project of a theology formulated in accordance with the methods of the empirical sciences, the following are probably the most important: G. B. Smith, *American Journal of Theology*, XXIV, Jan., 1920, pp. 150-154; J. B. Pratt, "Can Theology be Made an Empirical Science?" *American Journal of Theology*, April, 1920, pp. 180-190; Pratt, *The Religious Consciousness*, pp. 38-39; E. L. Schaub, *Philosophical Review*, XXIX, July, 1920, pp. 383-388; H. H. Scullard, *Hibbert Journal*, XVIII, July, 1920, pp. 818-821; W. W. Fenn, *Harvard Theological Review*, XIII, October, 1920, pp. 413-415; G. Galloway, *Mind*, N.S. 117, Jan., 1921, p. 103; G. Wobbermin, *Theologische Literaturzeitung*, Vol. 48, 1923, col. 181-191; E. S. Waterhouse, *The Philosophy of Religious Experience*, Epworth, 1923; A. C. Knudson, *Present Tendencies in Religious Thought*, Abingdon, 1924, pp. 138-147; Knudson, *The Doctrine of God*, *ibid.*, 1930, pp. 127-128, 130-135, Kenneth Edward, *Religious Experience: Its Nature and Truth* (Kerr Lectures), T. and T. Clark, 1926, Chs. VII, VIII; G. T. Rowe, *Reality in Religion*, Cokesbury, 1927; R. G. Milburn, *Theology of the Real and The Logic of Religious Thought*, Williams and Norgate, 1925 and 1929; Walter M. Horton, in *Religious Realism* (ed. by Macintosh), 1931, pp. 277-304; J. S. Bixler et al., *The Nature of Religious Experience*, Harpers, 1937. For a fuller reply than can be given here to the criticisms of my position offered by some of the authors of the last-mentioned book (E. G. Bewkes, [J. S. Bixler, Vergilius Ferm, H. R. Niebuhr, and G. F. Thomas], see my articles, "Empirical Theology and Some of Its Misunderstandings," and "Theology, Valuational or Existential?" in *The Review of Religion*, New York, May and November, 1939.

might readily agree that in a comprehensive philosophy of religion the truth of the necessary presuppositions of empirical theology must be thoroughly investigated.

But after all this has been said, it may be admitted that the inclusion of the existence of God among the presuppositions of empirical theology is not necessary and is so liable to be misunderstood that it is perhaps undesirable from the pedagogical point of view. A preliminary consideration of the existence of God might well enough be introduced among the empirical data of theology, rather than among the presuppositions. Particular instances of revelation, the presence of the Divine within the field of human experience and observation, necessarily involves the existence of the Divine as in some sense a reality. There are many aspects of Deity, and it is only the existence of Deity, or the Divine, in one or more of its aspects that can be presupposed on the basis of successful religious dependence, and not necessarily Deity in all of its supposed aspects. To the extent indicated, then, it would seem that the criticism of procedure in presupposing (in *Theology as an Empirical Science*) the existence of God, is fully justified. But when objection is made to the theologian's beginning with the Divine as an experienced reality, on the ground that just as "matter," "form," "consciousness," and the like, seem very different, after the scientist has examined them, from what they were at the beginning of the investigation, so also it may be expected that the Divine will seem very different at the end of our theological study from what it seemed at the outset, although the contention may be admitted to be valid, I would nevertheless still insist that this reinterpretation of the object, or subject-matter, of investigation does not mean its unreality, whether the object be matter, energy, consciousness, or the Divine.

As a matter of fact, however, the objection to presupposing, on grounds either of general observation or of religious experience, that a divinely functioning reality exists, is generally made by theologians whose own presuppositions as well as critical objections are determined by their idealistic philosophical predilections. From this point of view any theory of direct realism is stigmatized as "naïve," and "a step backward," on the alleged ground that science is dispensing with the categories of substance and cause (Knudson, *The Doctrine of God*, Abingdon, 1930, pp. 131, 132). But the situation in contemporary philosophy is very far from justifying the theologian in presuming to dismiss as untenable a formulation of scientific results in realistic terms. It is true that some scientists have attempted to formulate their generalizations in idealistic terms, but in this they are acting not as science necessarily requires but as the philosophy they have unnecessarily chosen necessarily requires. In none of its forms can philosophical idealism marshal coercive arguments in its support, and in what is perhaps its most classical form it has been shown to be self-

refuting (Cf. A. K. Rogers, "Professor Royce and Monism," *Philosophical Review*, XII, 1903, pp. 47 ff.; D. C. Macintosh, *The Problem of Knowledge*, Macmillan, 1915, Ch. VII; *The Pilgrimage of Faith*, Ch. VI).

Several critics find difficulty with the conceptions of "cause" and "law" as employed in the proposed empirical theology. In science, it is objected, cause means a particularly important antecedent. Is not the cause of the religious experience of the individual the religious life of the Church? Is the cause of religious experience outside the world of nature?

It may be answered that apart altogether from theology, the prevailing concept of cause needs revision. A definition of cause in terms of antecedent or accompanying *phenomena* (J. S. Mill) is simply what cause *would be*, if phenomenalism (Mill's philosophy) were the true philosophy. When we exchange phenomenalistic for realistic ways of thinking, the inductive methods (Mill's methods) are still available, the antecedent condition being a "half-way house" on the road toward the real agents or agencies (heavenly bodies, electrons, atoms, molecules, entelechies (?), sub-personal souls, persons, communities, God). If cause be interpreted as mere antecedent phenomenon, there can be no psychology of the person, as such. The Church is a cause of the individual's religious attitude, but this religious attitude is an attitude toward an objective Cause, other than one's self and other than the Church. Compare the results of the experiments of the beginner in chemistry, which are not caused *immediately* by his instructor and previous chemists, nor *simply* by himself, but by the reagents with which he deals. Whether God as Cause of religious experience is or is not to be regarded as outside of the world of nature depends upon whether or not the world of nature is defined so as to exclude God as active Being, the exercise of whose power may be depended upon in response to some discoverable kind of religious adjustment.

But certain of the critics, while differing among themselves on the question of religious realism, find fault with the view that the Divine can be directly experienced as immediately present within the field of human observation. Pratt opposes the view that the God of experimental religion is directly experienced and verifiable. In this he is followed by Schaub and Knudson. Wobbermin also, as a good Kantian, finds it impossible to endorse such "phenomenal ontology." In fact, as a confirmed Kantian dualist, he cannot but feel that all such terms as "empirical theology," "theology as an empirical science," and even "empirical philosophy" involve a contradiction in terms. And when Knudson objects that "in the proposed 'scientific' theology God is forced to function in a double capacity," namely, "as the analogue both of the sense-objects and of their supposed material ground or cause" (*Op. cit.*, pp. 133-134), the "confusion" he charges against the proponent of empirical theology is simply what

would naturally be his (Knudson's) own confusion if he, *as an epistemological dualist*, were asked to identify the experienced content of perception with the humanly unexperienced and unexperienceable, independently existing reality. Objection to the idea of an immediate experience of the divine, recognizably present as such, is just what we should expect of the philosophers named, in view of their more or less pronounced epistemological dualism, according to which what is experienced by man and what can exist independently of human experience are totally different existences. From that point of view, of course, the Divine, as independently existent, is never what is consciously experienced. But it is just this view, that physical things, human persons, and God, may be thought of as both independently real and to some extent directly experienced, that the experimental realist in religion would defend when he turns from empirical theology to an examination of its epistemological presuppositions.

Most of the critics stumble at the difficulty of applying scientific method in the realm of religious experience in such a way as to distinguish the data of theology from other elements in the experience. Has theology "any such critical technique for investigating the 'object' of its presuppositions as have the empirical sciences?" (G. B. Smith). "By what logic are certain experiences singled out as caused by [God] and therefore as revealing His nature, whereas others are ascribed to natural or to human agencies?" (Schaub). "Is the world of religious reality to be explored in the same manner as the physical universe? Can we by any process of abstraction and analysis find God? Is the object of religious consciousness simply one object among others, detachable from some larger whole, and capable of being known by the withdrawal of attention from all that we decide is not God? . . . And further when we have decided that only certain facts of consciousness are religious data, . . . who is to decide . . . which of these data are valuable and which are valueless?" (Scullard). "In the intricate and baffling complex of religious experience, can it be positively affirmed that elements are included which demand an objective factor for their explanation?" (Fenn). Can theology "be regarded as a purely descriptive or empirical science," especially in view of the fact that "in religion . . . the data are not bare data but always involve interpretations and valuations? . . . [The appeal is] to 'religious experience at its best,' as if this were an empirical datum. Yet what is best in religion rests on valuation, while valuation implies a standard or religious ideal, . . . and this ideal cannot be merely empirical" (Galloway).

In answer it may be said that the technique for investigating the religious Object is prayer, or religious adjustment with a view to results. It is assumed that the divine Reality is dependable—somewhat as the scientist assumes the dependableness of nature—so that dependableness in the re-

sults of religious adjustment is a sign that one has struck Reality in religion. In other words, we discover God as divinely functioning reality when we find what we can always get by praying for it, in the sense of entering into the right religious adjustment with reference to it, the rightness of the adjustment being itself indicated by the dependableness of the result. It will be found that this dependable result is primarily spiritual and more particularly a result in the will, a promoting of a good and essentially Christ-like will, with such further results as may be the consequences of this. Thus there comes to be a second criterion of the Divine, besides dependableness in response to religious adjustment, namely, spiritual and particularly moral quality. We find, as a matter of fact, that what a critical philosophy of values discovers to be "the Good" and thus divine from the standpoint of religion as devotion to the Ideal, is the very quality which experiential religion, dependence upon the Divine Being, discovers to be promoted dependably through that adjustment, and so, presumably, divine. Scientific empirical theology and a critical philosophy of values tend to agree as to *what is divine*; or, in other words, there is an ultimate harmony between religion as dependence upon the Divine Power, and religion as devotion to the Divine Ideal. But it takes experiential religion, with its potentially scientific empirical theology, to discover *that God is*.

We cannot accept as valid, then, the criticism that empirical theology cannot escape an ultimate subjectivism. Pratt expresses the opinion that the attempt to make theology scientific is not only hopeless, but dangerous, "because in so far as it should succeed it would probably be at the cost of identifying God with the God-idea." Smith has said something like this, and Knudson repeats the same criticism. Schaub and Fenn also fail to see how subjectivism can be escaped. The latter thinks the right religious adjustment may be itself "a sufficient effective cause of the experience which follows," and he wonders why we should regard God as real cause of the help we receive through prayer to him, and not regard the Virgin and the saints as the causes of the help the Romanist receives through prayer to them. Schaub and Fenn both profess to see, or at least suggest, that there is no more proof of the reality of God in the dependable experience of moral salvation through the right type of religious dependence than there is proof of the existence of a devil in the fact of temptation to evil. Another critic triumphantly relates how a person of his acquaintance "*experimented* by praying alternately to God and to Buddha, with identical results."

Now, to take up this last point first, it is obviously doubtful whether in either case there could have been more of true prayer than is present in all earnest moral meditation. Prayer that can be depended upon to prevail is a persistent practice not only of spiritual aspiration and concentrated attention upon the religious Object, but of absolute surrender and confi-



dent dependence in relation both to the religious Object and to the moral ideal, together with an attitude of willingness to act in the moral direction, or at least of "willingness to be made willing." There may be wide differences in the names and in other imagery associated with the religious Object, provided only the Object be thought of as perfectly moral and sufficient for man's moral needs. It is not the intellectual but the moral element in guidance that can be made the subject-matter of a primary theological law. The intellectual element, like the emotional, has other necessary conditions. Even with very various and in some respects faulty notions of God, an approximately right religious adjustment may be possible; and where that is realized, the real God is the "dependable Factor" which responds, regardless of the name the worshipper gives Him, and in spite of many theological errors in the mind of the devotee.

Essentially similar is the answer to the other objections of the same general type. The scientific empirical method in theology is in no special danger of falling into subjectivism and being transformed into mere psychology of religion with no God but the God-idea; rather is it the point of view which does not feel that it must keep fulfilling the conditions of religious experience which is in danger of losing its assurance of the reality of God. Practical religious adjustment is not and cannot be adjustment to the mere God-idea recognized as such; it must always be to Reality thought of as represented essentially correctly by the God-idea. The *right* religious adjustment in the sense of the *dependably effective* religious adjustment necessarily involves belief in the objective reality of God, as distinct from the subjective God-idea by means of which God is represented. One does not have to believe in the devil nor consciously to adjust himself to such a being to experience temptation or even the highest possible degree of temptation. There is no empirical verification of the existence of the devil. But there is empirical verification of the existence of God, defined as a dependable Factor, favorable to spiritual values, and responding to the right religious adjustment. This may not amount to a verification of the existence of any highly defined, special God of any particular national or religious group, any more than the value of prayer to the Virgin or the saints is proof that the answer is an effect of which they are the cause.

It is a noteworthy fact that the critics do not dispute the claim that there are certain dependable results in the way of a difference for the better which occur on condition of a certain discoverable attitude which may be called the right religious adjustment. Not even John Dewey, in discussing this very point, will deny that the empirical facts of ethico-religious experimental religion are essentially as represented (*A Common Faith*, p. 12). It seems to be admitted, generally tacitly but sometimes explicitly, that the dependable results of the right religious adjustment can

be stated in the form of laws; the only question is whether this scientific information is theological, whether it has value for the verification of any elements in a theory of the nature of God. According to Pratt,

"It is probably a verifiable fact that when persons of a certain disposition and temperament and with proper training 'enter into and persist in a certain describable attitude toward a religious object regarded as real,' differences of a certain describable sort in their spiritual experience may be depended upon to follow. This is probably a fact and a scientific fact—scientific because repeatable and verifiable. But it is a fact not of theology but of the psychology of religion" (*American Journal of Theology*, XXIV, 1920, p. 185).

Here again, Pratt is followed by Knudson. In reply to this we would say that it is not a case of *either* theology *or* psychology, but of *both* the psychology of religion *and* empirical theology. If it is a verifiable fact that certain describable results dependably follow a certain religious adjustment (psychology of religion), it is also a verifiable fact that Reality, or a dependable Factor in Reality is the cause of these dependable results, and since this dependable Factor, whether we can say anything more about it or not, is the real God of experimental religion, the fact, thus stated, is a fact of empirical theology. And it is this fact which makes it possible for theology to become (in part) an empirical science.

When therefore it is asked, in the spirit of the objections we have been considering, wherein the method proposed is more scientific than that of Troeltsch or that of Wobbermin, and whether, with the eclectic assumption of the religious Object, all theology must not necessarily be eclectic, the appropriate answer can be given in the spirit of what has already been said, that Troeltsch's confessed theoretical agnosticism and Wobbermin's confessed unavoidable dogmatism are the result of the Kantian dualism of their epistemology (See discussion of their views in Part IV, Chs. XVI and XVII *infra*). The method proposed in theology as an empirical science rests, as has been shown, upon a monistic realistic epistemology. The independently real religious Object is immediately (though incompletely) experienced. Religious experience is not experience of one's own states simply, nor of mere "phenomena," but of the recognizable divine activity within human life. This makes possible the verification of theological hypotheses, and, consequently, theology as an empirical science. The epistemological dualist can have the desired religious experience, but he can have it only if he first assumes the existence of God; and yet, on his presupposition, the experience can never amount to verification of the assumption. God remains absolutely transcendent. "Revelation," for him, is not immediate presence of the religious Object,

but only an effect which, he may choose to believe, is caused by God. *On the basis of a dualistic religious epistemology*, no undogmatic theology can be more than eclectic; and, inasmuch as they have not cast off the Kantian dualism, Troeltsch and Wobbermin do not quite attain to a thoroughly scientific theology. Theology as a science is no more eclectic than any other special science; as biology selects verified knowledge about physical life, so theology selects verified knowledge about the divine life.

A further criticism offered by Pratt is to the effect that the person and work of Christ, even when interpreted as divine, ought not to be included under the empirical data of scientific theology. His criticism here is two-fold. He maintains that no mere historical datum or fact can be a scientific fact; to be scientific fact, a fact must be reproducible, verifiable, and this a fact or datum of history never is. Again, the divineness or divinity of Christ is an inference, and even if it were an inference from a scientific fact, it would not be itself a scientific fact.

In dealing with this criticism the essential point to be borne in mind is that in the historic Jesus we have the most conspicuous instance of the dependable result of the right religious adjustment, the clearest empirical demonstration of the scientific theological fact that on condition of a certain describable religious attitude, which we may call "the right religious adjustment," some real Factor, which we may call "God," causes (is causally related to) a certain describable experience, which may be variously expressed in such religious terms as "revelation," "special providence," "salvation," and "answer to prayer." Pratt's distinction between "historic fact" and "scientific fact" is practically identical with the common distinction between a particular instance of verification and the empirical law of which it is a particular verification. The term "datum" is sometimes applied to the historic fact, and sometimes to the empirical law; but this should cause no fatal confusion. The historic fact is datum with reference to the empirical law, or "scientific fact" as Pratt calls it, which is based upon such particular verifications; and the empirical law, in turn, is datum with reference to the more general theory built upon it and upon other empirical laws, or scientific facts.

One of the valid and pertinent criticisms of my treatment of this subject in *Theology as an Empirical Science* is that there is "need of a wider survey of the relevant facts" of religious experience than has been taken account of in the book, and that special attention might well be given to "the biographies of the saints and the classical writings of the various religions" (Scullard), together with more detailed reference to the experience recorded in the New Testament. All this is indeed explicitly *provided for* (*Op. cit.*, p. 33), but it is not actually provided, and it would be interesting and instructive if we could have, as Professor W. K. Wright has suggested, a series of scientifically formulated empirical theologies based

upon the actual religious experiences of the great non-Christian religions at their best, and finally, a comprehensive theological or metaphysical synthesis of these several contributions toward a theory of the nature of God.

There are a few further criticisms, directed chiefly against the part of *Theology as an Empirical Science* entitled "Theological Theory," which ought to be considered. It is objected by two of the critics, Smith and Schaub, that the main elements introduced under "theological theory" are conceptions with which we are familiar in traditional theology. Smith deprecates the retention of a God-idea which was elaborated in the middle ages with the help of a long-since outgrown system of metaphysics, while Schaub asks why, if theology is an empirical science, what is told of God is not new and to some extent transforming.

But it may well be asked whether the large measure of agreement between the elements which can be included under the theoretical part of theology as an empirical science on the one hand, and the most vital traditional Christian theology on the other, should not be regarded as ground for satisfaction rather than complaint. Even if the possibly essentially scientific character of an empirical theology be granted, it should not be expected that anything very novel will appear in the generalizations and theoretical part of such a theology, so long as there has not been included in the empirical survey any essentially new kind of religious experience. As a matter of fact, the best theologies of the best religion in the past have been *implicitly* scientific, just as the knowledge of the world and of humanity which experienced practical men have acquired is implicitly scientific. What was attempted in *Theology as an Empirical Science*, I may say, was not so much to advance the sum-total of our knowledge of God, as to take our empirical religious knowledge, which is implicitly scientific, and to make it *explicitly* scientific. It is to be hoped, however, that the definite employment of the inductive method in theology will lead in the future to steady progress in our understanding of the character and activities of God. Professor Horton makes an altogether gratuitous and, I think, mistaken concession, of which the critic of empirical theology is not slow to take advantage (Cf., e.g., J. D. Smart, *Hibbert Journal*, Jan., 1940, p. 235), when he says of the scientific theology he favors "that no great practical benefits can be derived from it for a long time to come" (*Religious Realism*; p. 293).

Still, this having been said, it cannot be claimed that the criticisms cited against the theoretical part of *Theology as an Empirical Science* have been completely answered. There are indeed, as Professor Knudson insists, "extra- or super-scientific factors in theology which cannot be discarded" (*Op. cit.*, p. 135). That some elements of this description have

been introduced into the division entitled "Theological Theory" cannot well be denied. A partial explanation, though hardly a complete justification of this circumstance, may be found in the intention of the author to use the book as a manual for his students in systematic theology, and not solely as a vindication of a certain methodology. It is true that attention was called to the three different ways in which material was included in the process of making the transition from theological laws to theological theory; but only one of these methods can be regarded as an adequate basis for regarding theological theory as knowledge, in distinction from more or less reasonably justifiable faith. This method is that of stating a theory of the nature of the divinely functioning factor in such a way as is necessary in order to account for the verified laws of empirical theology. Nevertheless, in including elements not completely verified and possibly not completely verifiable, but still not refuted, within the theoretical part of empirical theology, one is only doing—on a rather large scale, perhaps—what practically every scientist does in his own particular science. And, as has often been proved, such unverified elements in scientific theory may turn out to be exceedingly fruitful in directing further experimental research. However, in spite of all that can be said for the procedure adopted, it would have been better tactics if, in defending my methodological thesis, I had kept distinct and separate from each other the three different groups of material, namely, the fully verified elements, the practically imperative but only partially verified elements, and the apparently valuable and not yet discredited elements, such as might be gathered from imaginal intuition or respected tradition. This would have brought out more unmistakably the essentially scientific character of at least the core of theological theory. And yet, as we have said, the presence of not fully verified elements in a theory does not necessarily make the theory unscientific, provided the distinction be not forgotten between what is completely verified, what is only in process of being progressively verified, and what is only not yet refuted.

From what has just been said it will be inferred, reasonably enough as I think, that one may defend the thesis that theology may be so tested and formulated as to have at the heart of it a body of verified religious knowledge, and yet not find oneself in complete disagreement with those who maintain that, taken in the large, systematic theology is philosophy rather than science (G. B. Smith), an "empirically based metaphysics" rather than an empirical science (Pratt and Knudson). Theology is both, in fact. Narrowly defined, it is an empirical discipline, the theoretical division of which includes a verified part and a part not fully verified. Broadly defined, it is the most ambitious branch of philosophy, a metaphysics grounded upon empirical facts, religious and other, and perhaps in part

also upon appreciations of value. This last suggestion we must consider in a later connection (Chapter XXI *infra*).

We are inclined, then, to answer in the suggested affirmative Professor Fenn's good-natured inquiry as to whether there is not in my book "just a little too much flourishing of the words 'science' and 'scientific.' " Indeed the preface of the book itself admits almost as much. Still, to regard theology simply as a philosophy or a religious *Weltanschauung* tends to excuse much vagueness and the too easy admission of unverified assertions about reality on the basis of subjective evaluations. It would be a wholesome discipline for theologians to be required to distinguish their fully verified judgments from others not thus logically established (Cf. W. M. Horton, in *Religious Realism*, pp. 283 ff.).

The crucial question for theology as an empirical science is that which concerns the formulation of verified laws descriptive of the functioning of a divine reality. The formulations in *Theology as an Empirical Science* may with some show of reason be objected to, on the ground that, being in terms of "God, the Holy Spirit," they apparently assume the spiritual or essentially personal nature of the dependably responding reality.\* This is something which may be subjectively assured as an imaginal intuition and defended philosophically as reasonable, but it is not an item of scientifically verified knowledge. To be sure, it is reality depended upon for desired ethico-religious experience which Christians have learned to think of as the Holy Spirit; but in order to avoid any lingering remainder of unscientific dogmatism in the formulation of the laws of empirical theology, we shall here undertake a non-committal formulation in terms of *a divinely functioning reality*, with no necessary further presuppositions as to its character, nature or number. In order the better to emphasize the scientific character of the formulations, we shall add in each instance to the full verbal statement of the law a symbolic representation of the generalization, the symbols to be used being explained in the following table:

DFR = a divinely functioning reality;

RRA = the right religious adjustment (on man's part) or on condition of the right religious adjustment, i.e., spiritual aspiration, concentration of attention upon the religious Object, self-surrender to that divine being, an appropriating faith, willed responsiveness, and persistence in the same;

\* Cf. G. A. Coe's statement in his earliest book: "Every question arising in the psychology of religious experience may be understood in this way: Under what circumstances does the Divine Spirit work such or such a change in the minds of men?" (*The Spiritual Life*, Eaton & Mains, 1900, p. 17). For later statements by Coe and the present writer's critical comments see *The American Journal of Theology*, XII, 1912, pp. 353-368, and *The Methodist Quarterly Review*, LXXVI, 1927, pp. 202-218.

- ve = for a volitional effect i.e., an effect in moral conduct and character;  
 . = on condition of;  
 → = conditions a tendency toward;  
 ap = answer to prayer, in the sense of a desirable effect dependably realizable on condition of the "right" religious adjustment;  
 C = comprehensive, or when made comprehensive;  
 P = persistent, or when made persistent;  
 I = intensive, or when made sufficiently intensive; .  
 + = together with.

We now proceed to formulate, on the basis, it is claimed, of successful religious adjustment, a series of empirical laws. In the abbreviated, symbolic formulation, two forms will be suggested, namely, first the law of a normative psychology of religion, in terms simply of what happens on condition of the right religious adjustment, and second, the law of empirical theology, in terms of what a divinely functioning factor can be depended upon to produce, on condition of the right religious adjustment. The laws do not claim quantitative exactitude; they are laws of direction and tendency only, but none the less truly scientific for all that. There are many variables, such as the influence of physiological and mental constitution, environmental factors (especially social), traditional ideas, and previous individual history, which lead to variation in the readiness and steadiness and extent of results; but notwithstanding all that, the generalizations as to the tendencies operative on the fulfilment of the special conditions, are offered as essentially scientific statements of matters of fact.

1. The elemental law of empirical theology (law of the answer to prayer).

A divinely functioning reality, on condition of the right religious adjustment for a specific volitional effect (the promotion of the good will) tends to produce a desirable change in that direction in the will and character of the individual concerned, and this may be regarded as the basic, dependable "answer to prayer."

RRA (ve) → ap

DFR . RRA (ve) → ap

2. The law of the definite beginning of a normal and normative ethico-religious life (law of conversion or regeneration).

On condition of the right religious adjustment being made sufficiently comprehensive for the volitional effect to cover the principles and activities of the whole life, divinely functioning reality tends to bring about

the moral regeneration of the individual, as the comprehensive answer to his comprehensive prayer.

RRA (ve) C  $\rightarrow$  ap C (= Regeneration)

DFR . RRA (ve) C  $\rightarrow$  ap C (= Regeneration)

3. The law of the continuation of (perseverance in) the normal ethico-religious life (law of perseverance).

On condition of perseverance in the right religious adjustment for the comprehensive volitional effect referred to, a divinely functioning reality tends to promote the continuation of the normal ethico-religious life.

RRA (ve) C P  $\rightarrow$  ap C P (= Perseverance)

DFR . RRA (ve) C P  $\rightarrow$  ap C P (= Perseverance)

4. The law of the health of the ethico-religious life and experience (law of what in Christian tradition has been called "the fulness of the Spirit" or "baptism of the Spirit").

On condition of a sufficiently intensive cultivation of the right religious adjustment for the comprehensive volitional effect, a divinely functioning reality tends to promote the health and vitality of the normal ethico-religious life.

RRA (ve) C I  $\rightarrow$  ap C I (= Spiritual or Ethico-Religious Health)

DFR . RRA (ve) C I  $\rightarrow$  ap C I (= Health of the Ethico-Religious Life)

5. The law of the development of ideal ethico-religious character (law of sanctification, or "growth in grace").

On condition of the right religious adjustment for a volitional effect being made sufficiently comprehensive, persistent and intensive, a divinely functioning reality tends to bring about an intensive, comprehensive and persistent answer to prayer, in the form of a spiritual condition which is more favorable to the growth of ideal or normative ethico-religious character.

RRA (ve) C I P  $\rightarrow$  ap C I P (= Sanctification, "Growth in Grace")

DFR . RRA (ve) C I P  $\rightarrow$  ap C I P (= Sanctification, "Growth in Grace")

Up to this point I have avoided using the term "Christian," in order to call attention to the universal accessibility and validity of the attitudes and experiences described in these general empirical laws; but as I would use the term, meaning thereby the ideal values appreciated as normative in Christian life, I might have called this "law of sanctification" the law of the development of Christian character. Henceforth I shall use this sometimes partisan term as a shorthand expression for what is, after all,



pretty generally recognized as a specific but highly defensible apprehension of a universally valid spiritual and especially ethico-religious ideal.

From this point on, I shall give the empirical law in its theological form only. In order to have it in the form of a law of the normative psychology of religion only, it will simply be necessary to omit the symbol "DFR."

6. The theological law of the feeling of repentance, or of a Christian conviction of sin.

On condition of 1) at least the beginnings of volitional repentance (a turning in mind and will against moral evil, whether viewed in its religious aspect, as sin against God, or not), and 2) a sufficiently steady and continued contemplation of the contrast between one's own past life and action on the one hand, and the ideal principle of life, such as received particular expression in the historic Jesus, a divinely functioning reality produces, however "naturally," the feeling of sorrow for sin. This experience is accentuated if the beginnings of volitional repentance referred to are associated with the initiation of the right religious adjustment. In fact repentance in its emotional aspect tends to be both effect of and causally related toward the right religious adjustment.

DFR . RRA (ve) C I P + (right self-measurement, e.g. by the standard of the spirit of Christ)

→ Christian conviction of sin, "evangelical humiliation" (Edwards), Christian self-dissatisfaction.

7. The theological law of Christian or normative ethico-religious peace.

On condition of 1) "peace with God," i.e. the reconciliation with God involved in truly Christian faith, or the right religious adjustment, and 2) a steady contemplation of the fact that one is thus at peace with God, there is produced in the individual (by a divinely functioning reality) a feeling of peace. In this as in the other emotional phases of religious experience the conditions may have to be cultivated for some time and with considerable fidelity if all inhibiting influences (constitutional, environmental, ideational, or habitual) are to be effectively counteracted and overcome. But in any case, here as elsewhere, the emotional phase of the experience should not be sought for its own sake or as the primary concern.

DFR . RRA (ve) C I P + contemplation of the fact of peace with God

→ Christian peace, "the peace of God."

Most important in the right religious adjustment in this connection is the element of absolute surrender to God, and in particular to the will of

God. If one is in rebellion against God's will, he cannot be at peace with God, and if he is not at peace with God, he cannot reasonably expect to feel "the peace of God," no matter what his contemplative exercises may be. What he experiences may be vain confidence.

8. The theological law of Christian joy.

On condition of 1) success in the Christian life and especially in Christian work for others through assisting them into or in the right religious adjustment, and 2) a contemplation of this success with due humility and recognition of the "grace" of a divinely functioning factor, such a factor tends to produce a specific experience of Christian joy. Here again time and intensity of fulfilment of conditions may be necessary to overcome inhibiting conditions.

DFR . RRA (ve) C I P + Christian activity and success  
 + right contemplation of the same  
 → Christian joy.

9. The theological law of Christian love.

On condition of the right religious adjustment accompanied specifically by right thought about God and man (e.g. thinking of God as Father and of men as brothers) and right action toward God and man (filial action toward God and brotherly conduct toward men), a divinely functioning reality will naturally tend to give rise to right feelings toward God and man (grateful love to God and unselfish love toward men). "Christian love is the normal accompaniment of unselfish devotion toward God and man." In fact it is related to this manner of life both as cause and as effect. Right thought about man is not a mere realistic recognition of what the individual actually is; it will include and emphasize what, by the grace of God and with the brotherly help of his fellow-men, he may yet become.

DFR . RRA (ve) C I P + right thought and action toward  
 God and man  
 → Christian love to God and man

10. The theological law of religious assurance.

On condition of the right religious adjustment made so comprehensive, intensive and persistent as to lead to the experience of ethico-religious regeneration and to health of the spiritual life, and consequently, the appropriate special conditions being fulfilled, to the characteristic Christian feelings of peace, joy and love, and particularly on condition of an intellectually and religiously satisfactory theology, a divinely functioning reality tends to bring about, through an intuition which naturally arises out of the religious experience described, an assurance of religious

well-being, that is, both of the reality of an essentially Christ-like God and of one's own reconciliation with him. This is what, in evangelical Christianity, is known as "the witness of the Spirit."

DFR . RRA (ve) C I P + such special conditions as make for  
Christian peace, joy, love, etc. + an intellectually and reli-  
giously satisfactory theology  
→ intuitive, specifically Christian religious assurance

11. The law of divine guidance, especially as a theological law of guidance through ethico-religious experience.

On condition of persistent intensive cultivation of the right religious adjustment for the promotion of the good will in a thoroughly comprehensive way, a divinely functioning reality tends to produce a direction and character of the will so fundamentally right in habit and intention that the temptation to "rationalize" selfish and otherwise unworthy desires is largely overcome, so that when with this socially good will are combined a sound religious and social ideology, a right appreciation of intrinsic values, common sense, information as to relations of cause and effect, logical thinking, and a definite openness of mind to intuitive impressions as to the will of God, there naturally tends to emerge, intuitively or by reasoning or in both ways, a true insight into what ought to be done or at least attempted, especially for the doing of God's will, interpreted in terms of the welfare of individuals, of particular social groups, and of humanity at large. It should not be forgotten that the process involved in such "guidance" is not such as to guarantee infallibility in the result. In the promotion of the good will through dependably effective religious adjustment, there is a confidently recognizable divine factor, as there may believably be also in the elements of truth and rationality; but it may be that mistaken ideas and evaluations, or misinformation, or fallacious reasoning, will counteract the tendencies of the good will to choose the right action, or, in other words, to be guided to a discovery of what in the particular situation is in accord with the will of God. It is a mistake, therefore, to take uncritically suggestions arising intuitively in time of quiet and even prayerful meditation as certain guides for action, either one's own action or, especially, that of others.

DFR . RRA (ve) C I P + Christian love + right appreciation  
of intrinsic values + right ideology + correct and adequate  
information + logical thinking + definite seeking to know  
God's will → guidance toward true insight and right action

Let me repeat, this is not a law of infallible sequence, but of mere *tendency*.

12. The law of religiously conditioned health of body and mind and of divine healing in the narrow sense of the term.

On condition of an adequate cultivation of the right religious adjustment, and its normal consequences in will and feeling and thought, a divinely functioning reality naturally tends, especially when supported by faith and hope, to bring body as well as mind, through peace, joy, and religious assurance, into a more normal, cheerful and healthful condition, and even under certain not fully understood physiological conditions, to cure some species of bodily ills (*Cf. Jung, on pp. 72, 73 supra*).

DFR . RRA (ve) + peace, joy and assurance + aspiration  
toward health and healing, with an appropriating faith  
→ health and healing

Such ways to better health and possible healing should not, however, be pursued, at least ordinarily, to the exclusion of the less specifically religious ways of hygiene and medical science. It may be contended, perhaps not unreasonably, that all healing is divine healing. But in many instances powerful adverse conditions counteract and make ultimately inefficacious this healing tendency.

13. The laws of social salvation, or of the coming of the Kingdom of God.

Thus far we have formulated theological laws of individual experience only. It would be possible to add to these a parallel series of theological laws of religiously conditioned social experience, applicable to various social groups, such as the Church or other religious groups, the family, the community, the nation, and the world.

On condition of an adequate cultivation of the right religious adjustment, comprehensively, intensively, persistently, and unitedly in a social group, a divinely functioning reality will tend to bring about experiences such as may be interpreted as the real answer to the real prayer of the group in question, and eventually to effect a spiritual regeneration of the social community, ecclesiastical or other, to develop therein a Christian social character, with peace and Christian love prevailing, accompanied by recognizable divine guidance in some measure and affecting even the physical, economic and political well-being of the social units concerned, and, to some extent, of their wider social environment as well. In traditional terms, what is here envisaged is the empirically theological law, or rather a group of such laws, stateable for the present more perhaps in the form of hypotheses, at least for the nation and for the world at large, than as verified laws, but whether as hypotheses or possible laws, generalizations as to the general way and more particular ways in which a divinely functioning reality may be expected, and to some extent has already been ob-

served, to bring about the Kingdom of God, the reign of God's will, on earth.

(DFR . RRA (ve) C I P + the normal consequences of the same) made social without ceasing to be individual  
 + adequate social science  
 → the salvation of social groups and of society at large

These then are some of the scientific laws of empirical theology. On them as basis it is possible to claim scientific knowledge of God, defined as the reality which can be depended upon to function in the manner stated in these laws, and so, divinely, that is in a way that rightly commands our supreme devotion (in self-surrender, obedience, worship, and trust). More specifically, there is a God in the sense of a divinely functioning reality, which, as the essential objective cause, answers true prayer, regenerates the individual, continues and intensifies the new ethico-religious life in him, develops his spiritual character, promotes in the individual a conviction of sin, peace, joy, and the spirit of unselfish love of God and man, gives him assurance and guidance, and tends to promote his physical well-being, all especially on condition of certain discoverable and describable religious conditions, and which works through such spiritually renewed individuals toward similar experiences and results in the religious community and in other social groups, up to humanity as a whole.

Now to have all the verified knowledge contained in the various laws of empirical theology formulated above is to know a good deal about God, the Divinely Functioning Reality. We know what things are from what they do, causes from effects, fruit trees from their fruits, animals from their behavior, and personal character from personal conduct. So too we may know something of what the Divine Being is from what the Divinely Functioning Reality does. Reviewing then the laws of empirical theology, and making the transition from laws to theory in the usual scientific fashion, we may say that the Divine Reality is a reality that dependably responds to the right religious adjustment, that answers true prayer, that regenerates the human spirit, that maintains the regenerate life, that promotes the health of the spiritual life and develops essentially Christian ethico-religious character. Furthermore, this same Divine Reality convicts of sin, gives peace and joy, and "sheds abroad the love of God" in human hearts. Religious assurance and moral guidance are also among the gifts of this Reality which the early Christians called the Holy Spirit. And what is thus done for the individual on condition of the right religious adjustment is also done for the church and would be done for the community or for the world on the same condition. The laws are laws of individual and social salvation; the essential objective Factor is the Savior

of individuals and the potential Savior of the world. (For suggestions as to how this empirical theology may be supplemented, see Chapters XX and XXI below).

Before leaving this topic of the methodology of empirical theology, some notice should be taken of the recent symposium on the question, "Is a Science of Theology Possible?" in which the participants were Professors J. L. Stocks, J. W. Harvey, and John Laird (*Aristotelian Society, Supplementary Volume XIV*, 1935, pp. 186-213). Of the three, Professor Harvey is the most unequivocally negative in his answer to the question. Theology, he is convinced, cannot be a science, because in the first place its subject-matter is incapable of scientific apprehension. Scientific knowledge is made up of generalizations on the basis of particulars, but the object of theological study, it is urged, is "not a multiplicity of particulars in which general constants are to be detected." "The theologian's 'facts' are not instances, but expressions or revelations of Deity." The reality of God and revelation, however, is widely denied. The would-be scientific theologian is thus attempting to apply the procedure of science in a sphere where it cannot succeed in arriving at new generalized empirical knowledge. At best, his is "a fruitless inquiry in the spirit of devotion to truth" (*Op. cit.*, pp. 196-200, 202). Furthermore, the "revelations" or "discoveries" characteristic of religion are not the achievement of theologians as such, but of prophets and saints, of mystics perhaps, and of the ordinary religious person. To appreciate the import of religion one must know what it is to have committed oneself wholly to the Divine Being. "But this means exchanging detachment for attachment, and what then becomes of theology as science?" Divided in his motivation between truth-seeking and the desire to defend his religious values, the religious thinker finds himself in a dilemma where, if he is to be a satisfactory theological interpreter of religion, he must renounce the detachment of the scientist, while, if he is to be scientific, he must cease to think and speak as a theologian. Like philosophy, then, theology is not science, not discovery and explanation, but "interpretative commentary." The theologian's function "remains essentially exegesis" of alleged insight and revelation (*Ibid.*, pp. 201-203, 205).

Professor Harvey's fundamental mistake with reference to the project of an essentially scientific empirical theology is in supposing that what it must and does aim at is making the *whole* of theology scientific in the descriptive empirical sense. On the contrary, in my thought of it at least, there is excluded from scientific empirical theology both a normative theology of any merely intuitional faith and the metaphysical theology in which, it may be hoped, both empirical and normative theology will find not only their final intellectual test, but their ultimate theoretical warrant and vindication (V. Chs. XX, XXI *infra*). When there is a clear

understanding of the limitation of the task of empirical theology to a realistic investigation of the uniformities discoverable in the particular data of divine processes, that is, of events in which a divinely functioning reality or factor is operative, especially on condition of a certain discoverable, dependably effective religious adjustment, it becomes clear enough that the empirical theologian's facts *are* "instances"—particular manifestations of the operation of divinely functioning reality. Furthermore, there is no good reason for supposing that the scientifically minded theologian may not be at the same time an "ordinary religious person," given to "the practice of his religion," even if he be neither prophet, saint, nor mystic. I would repudiate the charge that the scientific empirical theologian is so unlike other scientific investigators, that he cannot be objective in the recognition of facts, just because he has a keen appreciation of the practical importance of what he is studying.

The late Professor Stocks was a competent philosopher, but his discussion of the subject before us is rather confusing, if not confused, by reason of his very broad definition of science and his seeming inability to distinguish empirical theology sharply either from the psychology of religion, descriptive and normative, or from the philosophy of religion. His attitude is open-minded and eirenic, but his final concession takes the disconcerting form of what will seem to many the paradoxical statement, if not worse, that "a theology can only become scientific by becoming a philosophy." Science, as Stocks uses the term, includes "every field in which the aim of knowledge is systematically prosecuted"; there is "no particular method" which is alone entitled to be regarded as "scientific." The one recognized differentia of science seems to be intellectual honesty, "purity of motive." "The scientist, *qua* scientist, wants knowledge and nothing else." Complaint is made that theologians "tend to show a confidence in their assertions about God not proportionate to the strength of the arguments offered," that the theologian "comes to his enquiry equipped with certainties to which, scientifically, he has no right," that he "treats things as certain which he does not even assert to be known." In short, theology, especially as claiming a place among the sciences, has this obvious peculiarity, that "the reality is disputed of the Being of which it purports to give an account."

The solution of the difficulty thus variously stated by Stocks we would find in the frank recognition that the so largely transcendent God of religious intuition and faith, concerning whom there may be much subjective certitude without much objective certainty, is not, as transcendent, an object of scientifically descriptive empirical theology, but the object of normative theology, or "dogmatics" (V. Ch. XX *infra*). What is the proper object of empirically scientific investigation is the divinely functioning reality, revealed as immanent in religious experience at its best.

Professor Stocks himself comes within hailing distance of such a theology when he speaks of what he vaguely calls "the systematic study of religious experience." Here God is for the theologian, he claims, "a half-defined implication of religious experience, to be further defined on the evidence of that experience, and in the light of that experience and in the light of what otherwise is known or conjectured about the world." Theology, so conceived, he sees, "would not be committed to any particular view of this central religious postulate" (*Ibid.*, pp. 186-188, 190-193).

The trouble with this "systematic study of religious experience" is that, as conceived by Stocks, it would include apparently, without any sharp differentiation from each other, a descriptive and more or less explanatory psychology of religion, an axiological philosophy of religion, a religious epistemology, and a normative psychology of religion vaguely conceived as including something like empirical theology, this empirical theology in turn passing over into a metaphysical theology. What is needed is, in the first place, a narrower and more exact definition of empirical science, differentiating it from everything properly called philosophy; then a critically realistic religious epistemology; next, a formulation, on the basis of religious experience, of the laws of an empirical theology kept quite distinct from all subjective religious intuitions and certitudes of faith. These last are the raw material for normative theology, or critical "dogmatics." Where this course is followed, it becomes clear that a theology can become scientific, not "by becoming a philosophy," but precisely by *not* becoming a philosophy, even though by becoming empirically scientific it will have established its claim to have its conclusions given equal consideration with those of other empirical sciences in any comprehensive synthetic metaphysics.

Professor Laird criticizes empirical theology as not having succeeded in *proving* any theological conclusion; but in view of his previous assertion that the hypothetical method which all empirical sciences employ yields only high probability, not demonstration, the objection seems not very weighty. He also objects that an empirical science of theology is "incapable of providing a scientific proof of cosmic holiness"; but, we may ask, why should it be expected to do so? The cosmos as a whole may be "numinous," but certainly it is not ethically numinous, or holy, in all its parts. The question is raised as to how an empirical science of theology would differ from a theistic philosophy using the hypothetical method. Our answer would be that such a theology would not be *identical* with such a philosophy, but its most important ingredient. Laird insists, quite rightly, that "an essential part of all theology must be extra-scientific." This is true of such a discipline as a critical Christian dogmatic, which can be scientific only in the normative and not in the descriptive empirical sense. That in the end Laird is not wholly antagonistic to the claim of a



possible scientific status for empirical theology seems to be indicated, since he presents in a somewhat favorable light the idea that a theistic view of the universe, explaining "the otherwise inexplicable fact of 'religious experience'" and not contradicting the rest of science, "should be accepted on scientific grounds." But the whole conception here lacks precision, and the extent of the author's commitment to the view thus patronizingly referred to remains undefined and ambiguous (*Ibid.*, pp. 208-210, 212).

The symposium as a whole, one regrets to say, is disappointingly superficial, vague and inconclusive; but it is a satisfaction to discover that the criticisms offered and questions raised with reference to theology as an empirical science are so very far from being unanswerable.



## PART IV

### DUALISTIC REALISM IN RELIGION





## Chapter XIII

### ARGUMENTATIVE THEISM

---

Dualistic realism in epistemology is the doctrine that even at the moment of perceptual experience the immediately experienced object and the object which exists independently are two wholly different objects, that is, they are totally different as existences, or numerically, no matter how similar they may be supposed to be in their qualities. From this point of view a problem naturally arises as to how the independently existing reality can ever come to be known, if it is never to any extent immediately experienced, never within the field of direct observation. The agnostic conclusion is naturally and, it would seem, logically suggested; and while practice and common sense tend to hold us to the belief that we do know, to some extent, things which exist independently of whether we or other human beings are experientially conscious of their existence or not, there are some dualistic realists who have the courage of their logical conclusions and who subscribe, theoretically at least, to agnosticism with reference even to the independently existing, external physical world.

Our present concern is not with dualistic realism and agnosticism in relation to the physical world, but rather with similar views with respect to the object of religious interest. Dualistic realism in religion would maintain that there is a religious object, a divine reality, which exists independently of all religious experience and thinking—this is epistemological realism in religion; but, as *dualistic*, it maintains that there is always a total numerical or existential duality between the religious content and the divine reality. In other words, not only is the divine reality, commonly called "God," totally distinct and independent as an existent from our God-idea; even in religious experience what is experienced is never more than the religious person's own subjective states. The divine reality is never immediately experienced, never directly perceived. Speaking in terms of experience, God, or the divine, is never discovered by us as revealed within the sphere of our direct experience and observation.

From this point of view, as in the case of dualistic realism in the physi-

cal realm, the question arises as to how there can be any real knowledge. If God, or the divine, is not now and never has been presented, manifested, revealed within human experience, how can that supposedly existing object of religious interest be really known to exist? How can any judgment about the divine be verified? Must not religious agnosticism be given the last word in all religious thought and discussion? As a matter of fact, the agnostic conclusion is very commonly drawn by those who have begun by assuming the truth of the dualistic point of view, and this religious agnosticism is much more difficult to deal with, from a practical point of view, than a theoretical agnosticism with regard to the physical world and human selves. Even those who on philosophical grounds are led to accept a dualistic and agnostic theory in general epistemology live as if they had direct experience and verified knowledge of at least some things physical, and they are no doubt right in doing so, even if inconsistent with their own philosophical principles; they *have* perceptual experience and knowledge of the world, although if their dualistic theory were true they could have neither. But those who never recognize the divine as revealed within the world of their experience and who believe there is no such revelation or possible discovery, are easily tempted to act upon the negative hypothesis and live as if revelation or empirical discovery of the divine were neither an actuality nor a possibility. Failing thus to enter into such religious adjustments as tend to condition further manifestations of the divine (or what the non-dualistic realist takes to be such), they naturally fail to experience the further revelation of the divine which religious adjustment, rightly made, normally conditions. And so their negative religious position tends to be confirmed. Living as if there were no divine reality, they have comparatively little religious experience of any cognitive value, and they may even pass from agnosticism to pure subjectivism in religion, with its denial of the independent reality of the unexperienced, unrevealed, and presumably unknowable God. Thus while theoretical agnosticism as to the physical tends to be corrected by the never-failing fact of sense-perception, religious agnosticism tends to become more and more confirmed; the agnosticism and the lack of religious experience endlessly aggravate each other.

But for many practical reasons religious interest tends to linger for a time, even after any religious experience worth speaking of has been lost. And for those still interested in being able to believe in God, the next best thing to having direct experience, or revelation, of God for themselves would be either to have authentic word from others who have had such an experiential revelation, or to be furnished with what can be taken as a logically sound demonstration of the truth of the belief that the kind of God they feel the need of really exists. As a

matter of historical fact both of these substitutes for the revelation and discovery of God in personal religious experience have tended to flourish alternately or side by side. For the less intellectual and critical, the testimony of external authority to the alleged fact of direct revelation of God in the past has seemed satisfactory. Among those who have wanted to do their own experiencing and thinking, the argumentative, so-called "proofs" of the existence of God have throughout the generations been greatly in favor. But in the great creative periods in the history of religion, such as the New Testament period, the appeal to the tradition of a revelation belonging to the past alone was quite secondary, while argumentation to prove the existence of an unexperienced God was conspicuously absent. Actually operating divine power was so convincingly present in the experience of Jesus and the Apostolic Church that any attempt to establish the reality of the divine by intricate argument would have been felt to be a work of supererogation. The observation is one which has quite general application. Theistic argument is symptomatic, as a rule, of the persistence of religious interest along with a decline of religious experience.

Moreover, with the decline of religious experience and so of religious revelation in the experiential sense, there came to be less ground for assurance of the reality of revelation in the past, so that the prestige of the second-hand "revelation" supposed to be conveyed to the individual by way of tradition and external authority also tended to decline. Under these circumstances the seeming necessity of demonstrations of God promised by rational theology became imperative. There seems to be truth then in the Hegelian observation that "the owl of Minerva takes its flight only when the shades of night are gathering" (Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, Preface).

The situation would not have been and would not now be so bad, if the supposed proofs of God's existence were really demonstrative. But there is reason to question the conclusiveness of any of the so-called proofs. Such concepts as those of emergent evolution and creative self-determination at the time embolden some to call in question even St. Thomas's famous "five proofs" (Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, I, 2, 3; *Summa Contra Gentiles*, I, 13, 28; II, 16; E. Gilson, *The Philosophy of St. Thomas Aquinas*, Heffer, 1929, Chs. IV, V; R. Garrigou-Lagrange, *God, His Existence and Nature*, Herder Bk. Co., 1934-1936, Vol. I). (1) Aboriginal becoming, or creativity, something like a self-moved mover, is suggested as an alternative to Aristotle's Unmoved Mover (besides the ever-to-be-avoided *regressus ad infinitum*). (2) Essentially similar is the suggestion of a creatively emerging, self-caused Cause. (3) From this point of view it may seem that a sufficient account of the first emergence of Being out of non-being may be given in terms of mere possibility, instead

of explaining it in terms of an aboriginal "necessary Being." Compare the speculations of A. N. Whitehead (*Process and Reality*, Macmillan, 1929) and N. Berdyaev (*The Destiny of Man*, Scribners, 1937). (4) Again, while it is true enough that awareness of any degree of a quality involves implicitly the normative use of the idea of the quality in perfection, we are not logically required to suppose that there necessarily *exists* a perfect being corresponding to the abstract ideal. (5) The fifth Thomistic "proof," the teleological, we shall deal with further on in the present chapter. Meanwhile, without committing ourselves to the suggested alternatives, let us candidly admit that until all possible alternatives to the other four of the five Thomistic arguments have been conclusively *disproved*, the arguments themselves can hardly be said to have been conclusively *proved*.

But even if one might hesitate to prejudge the case for or against the theistic arguments considered apart from any special epistemological pre-suppositions, it may be said at once that it would not be at all surprising if all such argumentation from the point of view of a dualistic theory of knowledge were to turn out to be futile. What can be demonstrated by reasoning is not that some particular person or thing exists; but only that some particular proposition or belief is true if certain other beliefs are true. The normal way of finding out whether any object of thought exists in reality or not is by fulfilling the appropriate conditions of gaining perceptual experience of it. And if, as according to a dualist's epistemology is the case, immediate perceptual experience of any independently existing reality is impossible, plainly there can be no *empirical* demonstration of the existence of God or of anything else beyond mere phenomena. If there is any non-empirical way of demonstrating the existence of independently existing divine or other reality in spite of epistemological dualism, or mere phenomenalism, it is for the dualist to make it plain.

The most curiously interesting of all the theistic arguments is the so-called ontological proof, undertaking to demonstrate the existence of God from the idea of God. From the dualistic point of view no experience such as would be needed to verify the idea of an independently existing deity is at all possible, and as for any alleged demonstration by argument, it would be unreasonable to expect to find it other than fallacious and sophistical. If God be defined as perfect being, a greater than which cannot be conceived, the inference, apart from any verifying experience, that such a being exists either involves a begging of the question or else is a plain instance of *non sequitur*, according as the term "being" is or is not intended to mean *existent* being. From the point of view of absolute idealism, it may be remarked in passing, the



ontological argument boils down to the (supposed) rational insight that in view of the philosophical considerations adduced by the absolute idealist, God, as the all-reality-including Mind, necessarily exists. The fact is, however, that the concept of a single, all-inclusive, rational or super-rational Mind is self-contradictory and self-refuting. An all-including, rational mind or experience would necessarily include, and yet could not include finite minds' experiences of error and ignorance. A super-rational conscious experience or mind could not include, without modification, the rational experiences of finite minds, and so could not be all-including (Cf. *The Pilgrimage of Faith*, Ch. VI, especially pp. 150-52).

From the point of view of an immediate or monistic religious realism, the ontological procedure, however, moving from the idea of a divine reality to the affirmation that there is a divine reality, becomes an interpretation of experience, rather than an attempted deductive demonstration. In other words, if it be argument at all, it is in truth the religio-empirical argument; the divine reality of which the religious expert has an idea is known by him to exist, because in his religious experience he has experience of, first-hand acquaintance with, just such a divine reality. W. E. Hocking uses this approach from a point of view which identifies divine reality with the perfectly rational Absolute Whole, of which it is claimed that everyone has some experience, while the mystic's experience is the fullest and most nearly complete.

H. N. Wieman follows the same religiously realistic ontological procedure but with a different definition of divine reality. For him, the divine reality, God, is whatever it is that makes for the highest human value, especially on condition of right human adjustments. Another and perhaps more significant form of the religio-empirical reinterpretation of the ontological argument is that which would point out that the person who has experienced the divinely functioning response of reality to a certain dependably effective (and so, "right") religious adjustment is able, on the basis of that verifying experience, to affirm the existence of such a divinely functioning reality (Cf. *Theology as an Empirical Science*, Pt. I, Ch. VI). This has the advantage of starting from a closer definition of the God of moral redemptive religion than that used in the procedure of either Hocking or Wieman. But all this is convincing, of course, only from the point of view of a monistic and realistic religious epistemology. Kant was right in holding that from the dualistic point of view, in which argumentative proof seems so essential since empirical demonstration is impossible, the ontological argument for God has no demonstrative value whatever. Moreover, no so-called empirical form of the ontological argument is any longer the original ontological argument, which undertook to prove *by reason* that God, as Perfect Being, neces-

sarily exists (Cf. Julian N. Hartt's unpublished dissertation, *The Ontological Argument for the Existence of God*, in the Yale University Library).

The cosmological or aetiological argument, arguing from the chain of cause and effect in nature that there must have been an original creative first cause, was supposed by the dualistic realist, John Locke, to give us "demonstrative knowledge of God." Kant disputed this claim on the triple ground that there is no conclusive reason for choosing between the idea of first cause and that of a beginningless series of causes, that even if we could exclude the latter it would not follow that the first cause of the world was the God of religion, and that in any case on the ground of dualistic epistemology (phenomenalism) we could not verify the hypothesis of causation by a divine being, or of any other being beyond the bounds of possible human experience. Now it may be that the concept of an unimaginable first cause is logically preferable to the self-contradictory notion of an infinite sum of links in a beginningless causal chain. And it may be that Whitehead's concept of a rational cosmic principle of concretion affords some relief in connection with the second difficulty referred to; but *for the dualist*, the third objection is conclusive against any demonstration (verification) of the existence of any independently existing divine reality.

The anthropological argument is a special form of the causal argument, interpreting the causal principle, according to which the cause must be adequate to the effect, as involving the view that the adequate cause of man as mind must itself contain or be mind, so that there must presumably be a creative cosmic Mind, or God. Here again obviously for the dualist, or phenomenalist, the course of thought is quite precarious. If we have never witnessed any causal process in the independently existing world, what can one say about what it must be, or even about what it is or may be? But even from the point of view of a non-dualistic realism there is a special difficulty about this argument. If man is a responsible free agent, there must be some emergence of novelty in reality, and if there is humanly creative emergence of novelty in man's responsible activity, who is to say that there could be no other instance of the mysterious emergence of novelty in the universe? May not finite mind have merely emerged as a not completely predetermined novelty? This is simply suggested as a possible alternative to the conception of causality presupposed in the anthropological argument.

In its pre-Kantian, pre-Darwinian form the teleological argument for God—in other words, the argument not *from* design, but from adaptation, especially in the organic world, *to* design—was very impressive. From the point of view of the Kantian dualism, however, the argument

was reduced to unverifiable speculation, and with Darwin's theory of natural selection as the explanation of the survival of forms well adapted to the environment, the claim of anything like demonstrative certainty for this argument was very generally given up. Probably as good a job of reconstruction of the teleological argument as has been done in recent years from the point of view of a dualistic epistemology is to be found in F. R. Tennant's *Philosophical Theology* (Cambridge University Press, Vol. II, 1930, Ch. IV). He makes use in his argument of the correspondence between thought and things, the adaptation of organisms to their environment, the preadaptation of the inorganic world to the subsequent essential requirements of life, and the development of the aesthetic and moral phases of human personality on the basis of favorable cosmic conditions. It is a remarkable omission, however, that no use is made in Tennant's argument of the similar development, under similar conditions, of the religious consciousness, nor of the favorable response of reality to the attitudes involved in its developed form, as critical moral redemption religion. (Cf. R. L. Calhoun, *God and the Common Life*, Scribners, 1935, p. 278; also D. L. Scudder, in his recently published dissertation, *Tennant's Philosophical Theology*, Yale University Press, 1940). The omission is explained in part as being logically involved in the dualism of Tennant's general as well as religious epistemology. In his general epistemology he disintegrates the unitary, independently real object of direct perception into three distinct and mutually exclusive objects, namely, the particular momentarily existing perceived object of the individual perceiver ("o"), the mentally constructed object referred to as a basis of intercommunication between different minds ("O"), and the forever unexperienced and in logical consequence unknowable independently existing object ("ω") (*Op. cit.*, Vol. I, 1928, Ch. X). Tennant himself follows common sense rather than logic in claiming, even from his dualistic point of view, that we can have knowledge of the unexperienceable world on the basis of causality. There must be a one-to-one, point-by-point correspondence, he holds, between what is in the independently existing cause and what is discovered in the experienced effect. But that this is knowledge is more than Tennant is logically entitled to say. For all the phenomenalist knows, the independently existing cause of phenomena may be simply a divine Creator, as Berkeley supposed, or a plurality of creators, producing a phenomenal reality not at all closely resembling, even point by point, the independent reality.

On Berkeley's theory a great place is made for teleology, of course; consequently our present complaint against Tennant is not so much that he assumes illogically the possibility of knowing the general character of an independently existing cosmic reality wrongly supposed

by him to be forever shut out from man's immediate experience. Rather would our principal criticisms of his argument be, first, that even from the point of view of his common-sense over-leaping of logic in order to assume knowledge of the supposedly forever unexperienced, independently existing cosmos, he gives preferential treatment to the intellectual, aesthetic, and moral sides of the spiritual life, in distinction from the religious; and secondly, that the (unnecessary) dualism of his general epistemology, carried over (logically enough) into the religious sphere, leads him to deny that there is any verifying value, not only in the rather abnormal experiences of extreme mysticism, but even in the perfectly normal experiences of practical, ethical religion at its best.

As Professor Norman Kemp Smith has emphatically pointed out (*Op. cit.*), the teleological interpretation of nature is the contribution fundamentally of the religious consciousness, not a donation made to religion by a wholly disinterested investigation of scientific fact. This is not sufficiently appreciated by Tennant, whose dualistic religious epistemology leads him constantly to underestimate or even to discard altogether, as we have just seen, the possible knowledge-value of religious experience (*Philosophical Theology*, Vol. I, Ch. XII). Nevertheless, it is true enough, as Tennant contends, that when we have considered the adaptation of thought to things, the adaptiveness characteristic of organisms, the adaptation of the inorganic environment to organic life, the beauty and sublimity of nature, and man's moral status and its preconditions, the cumulative effect is such as to produce a very strong impression of cosmic teleology. There is, of course, the problem of evil, as Tennant sees (*Ibid.*, Vol. II, Ch. VII), demanding the teleologist's attention; but it is not a problem that cannot be dealt with reasonably from a religious point of view (*Ibid.*; cf. Macintosh, *The Reasonableness of Christianity*, Ch. VII). Perhaps the problem is made unnecessarily difficult for Tennant, as it is for many others, by an unsympathetic consideration of the notion of "unconscious purpose," or *Zweckmassigkeit ohne Zweck* (*Ibid.*, pp. 107-109). There is no need to interpret the ruthless destructiveness of natural processes in relation to wrongly adjusted individual lives as if each particular disaster to life and values were the specially intended, consciously created act of the Divine Mind and Will at the time of its happening. At this point the conception of habitual process as the deposit of an original conscious creativity—a conception of which Samuel Butler made much (*Life and Habit*, 1877; *Evolution Old and New*, 1879; *Unconscious Memory*, 1880; *God the Known and God the Unknown*, 1879) will be found helpful, if used with discrimination. General Smuts (*Holism and Evolution*, Macmillan, 1926) and Edmund Noble (*Purposive Evolution*, Holt, 1926) make the mistake,

as it seems to me, of denying all "evidences of design" in an ultimately mysterious, unconscious quasi-teleology; but Tennant and many others have aggravated the problem of evil by insisting upon the opposite extreme, according to which all "evidences of design" in natural events are to be interpreted in terms of *present* consciously creative causation by superhuman mind. It would be better, taking a suggestion from Whitehead, to explain much of the mutual adaptedness to which Tennant refers, and particularly the adaptedness of the order of nature to be known and even largely foreknown by mind and to serve as a medium for the education of moral personality, by positing only an *original* ingression of rationality into the creative process by a primordial, rational, creative Cause—not a mere "principle," but an intelligent, purposive Power (A. N. Whitehead, *Science and the Modern World*, Macmillan, 1925, Chs. X, XI; cf. Tennant, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 105; R. L. Calhoun, *op. cit.*, pp. 157-158, 181; P. A. Bertocci, *The Empirical Argument for God in Late British Thought*, Harvard Univ. Press, 1938, pp. 227-239, 253-254, 256-259, 283-288). From this point of view creatively evolving humanity is seen as learning rationality empirically, in the history of the race and not simply in the history of the individual, and learning it thus from nature, in which, in so far as nature is rational, the rationality of form is there as an established habitual order, because it was originally purposively put there by a divinely rational and creative Spirit.

In arguing thus from the mutual adaptation of thought and things, of reason and reality, to existence of a rational creative Being causally related to the constitution of the world, care must be taken not to fall into an extreme and dogmatic rationalism, according to which objective reality would be thought of as *remainderlessly* rational, and ideal rationality as completely realized in the objective world as experienced in an all-inclusive Absolute. There is always more content in the concrete subject-matter of judgment than in the abstract predicate; there is much to be learned through experience which we can never discover if we are determined to restrict our investigations to what can be seen from the high and dry apriori road. But from the point of view of a strict epistemological dualism, experience of independent reality is impossible, so that many, making a virtue of necessity, accept the dictates of a dogmatic rationalism as the exclusive but at the same time royal road to metaphysical knowledge.

In recent decades, however, there has been a reawakened and growing interest in the argument from values—other values than those of rationality—to the existence of a God assumed to be forever beyond empirical verification. Aesthetic values as realized in the natural world are sometimes made the basis of theistic argument, as when Earl

Balfour invokes design to account for the appearance and survival of beautiful forms where natural selection is not a factor and where mere luck seems incredible (*Theism and Humanism*, Hodder and Stoughton, 1915, Ch. III). But what we have here, especially from a dualistic and logically agnostic point of view, is obviously only permissible surmise, recourse to which is not to be despised, particularly by those who are prevented by their epistemological or other presuppositions from attaining to anything more significant or certain.

It is probably true that when mention is made of arguing from values to God, it is of moral values that most men think. Kant's attempt to compensate for destroying the supposed knowledge of rational theology by substituting a practical faith, which he embodied in his moral argument for God, is well-known and has been often criticized. It virtually argues that since, if there is a God, what ought to be will be, we may believe that what ought to be will be and that there must be a God to make it come out so. As an imaginal intuition and faith it may be allowed to stand, but as a supposed demonstration it would have to be rejected as essentially circular, the fallacious rationalization of a wishful thought.

No less inconclusive and fallacious is the form given the moral argument by the late Hastings Rashdall. In his *Theory of Good and Evil* he argues thus:

"The belief in God . . . is the logical presupposition of an 'objective' or absolute Morality." "Our moral ideal can only claim objective validity in so far as it can rationally be regarded as the revelation of a moral ideal eternally existing in the mind of God." "An absolute Moral Law or moral ideal . . . does not exist in the mind of this or that individual. Only if we believe in the existence of a Mind for which the true moral ideal is already in some sense real, a Mind which is the source of whatever is true in our own moral judgments, can we rationally think of the moral ideal as no less real than the world itself. Only so can we believe in an absolute standard of right and wrong, which is as independent of this or that man's actual ideas and actual desires as the facts of material nature" (*Theory of Good and Evil*, Oxford, 1907, Vol. II, p. 212).

Here there is an obvious and unpardonable confusion of *validity* (of an absolute ideal) with *presence as an ideal in consciousness* and with *realization in character*. In opposition to Rashdall we would venture to say that according to the rational moral consciousness absolute moral obligation is a fact, whether there is a superhuman law-giver or not. Even if we knew there was no being higher than man himself, there

would still be a categorical imperative of duty resting upon the consciousness of man. Justice and mercy would still be better than their opposites, and thus matters of imperative obligation. All that we are logically entitled to conclude about God from the certainty of moral obligation is, first, that if there be a God who is worthy of our absolute worship and trust, what is our duty to persons must be God's will for our conduct, and in the second place, that the existence of finite persons rightly conscious of moral obligation entitles us to say that in this respect reality is as it might reasonably be expected to be if there were back of the creative evolution of such moral personalities a morally purposive God. To this extent reality is as if there were a God, and so there is this reason (among others) for believing in such a being. Obviously it is not a demonstration.

It is surprising to find the much lauded author of *Moral Values and the Idea of God*, the late Professor W. R. Sorley, not only endorsing Rashdall's "striking" argument, but expressing his own view in the following similar terms:

"Persons are conscious of values and of an ideal of goodness, which they recognize as having undoubted authority for the direction of their activity; the validity of these values or laws and of this ideal, however, does not depend upon their recognition: it is objective and eternal; and how could this eternal validity stand alone, not embodied in matter and neither seen nor realized by finite minds, unless there were an eternal mind whose thought and will were therein expressed? God must therefore exist and his nature be goodness" (*Moral Values and the Idea of God*, Putnam, 1919, pp. 352-353).

"The recognition of the moral order and of its relation to nature and man, involves the acknowledgment of the Supreme Mind or God as the ground of all reality" (*Ibid.*, pp. 513-514).

We must not forget to add, however, that on sober second thought (or is it explanatory comment?) Sorley confesses that the argument from morality to God is "not . . . a rigidly demonstrative proof" (*Ibid.*, p. 517. Cf. A. E. Taylor, *The Faith of a Moralist*, Macmillan & Co., 1930, Vol. I, p. 101: "God as the greatest good is real." Cf. pp. 60, 209 f.).

Professor John Baillie seems to me to have expressed the real significance of the moral argument with more circumspection and accuracy. I subjoin a few excerpts:

"Perhaps we may say that what religion stands for is . . . the sense and the assurance that in doing our duty and in abiding by our standards *we somehow have the very Heart and Soul of*

*things with us and are aligning ourselves with the Eternal.*" "To believe in God is, at least in its beginnings, hardly more than a deeper way of believing in duty." "It is never possible for a man to have a firmer hold upon God than he has upon duty." "It is difficult to think that any mere argument could ever directly bring faith in God to birth in a man's soul." "The real truth is not that man at last concludes that his values imply the reality of God, but rather that from the beginning he *finds God in his values.*" "Something great and righteous wants us and requires of us our help." "The thought of God is bound immediately to arise. The Universe cannot demand righteousness and love of me, unless Itself be righteous and loving; but how can anything be righteous and loving except a living Person?" (*The Roots of Religion in the Human Soul*, Doran, 1926, pp. 110, 215, 221, 228, 238, 240, 245; see also Baillie's article, "The Meaning of Duty," *Hibbert Journal*, July, 1926).

Here we have not an argument to coerce unbelievers into admitting that the existence of God has been proved, but an imaginal intuition of God naturally arising in connection with the consciousness of duty, and finally rationalized in reflective thought. Essentially the same point of view is expressed in the same author's larger work, *The Interpretation of Religion*, Scribners, 1928, p. 318: "Religion is a moral trust in reality."

In both of these earlier works Professor Baillie's position was still, if I am not mistaken, essentially in accord with the Kantian epistemological dualism, at least on the religious side. In his recent work, *Our Knowledge of God*, however, he seems to have come over to the side of a direct or monistic realism in religion.

"Knowledge of God's reality comes to us," he holds, "through direct personal encounter with him." "There is no reality which more directly confronts us than the reality of God." "Absolute Reality is directly revealed to us in the form of an Absolute Obligation. . . . Nevertheless this is only half a truth." "The Source of the obligation is Himself directly revealed to us" (*Our Knowledge of God*, Scribners, 1939, pp. 143, 155, 161-162, 166).

In view of his repeated emphasis upon our direct confrontation with God I am inclined, as I have said, to think of Professor Baillie as having changed from a dualistic to a monistic realism in his religious epistemology, although, as I have already suggested in another connection, the monistic realism remains somewhat dogmatic. What I would sug-



gest, as indeed I have done in Chapter Eleven, is that from the point of view of a critical monistic realism, instead of having to *argue* from absolute value and the process of its progressive realization to the existence of a divine reality, what we do is to *interpret* absolutely valid value as divine, and the process of its realization as in the last analysis a divine process.

We turn now to a consideration of the argument from *religious* values to God, especially as a proposed way of escape from the agnosticism of a dualistic epistemology. Let us for the sake of explicitness assume the validity of the values of ethical theism. Can we logically conclude that ethical theism is true, or in other words that a moral God exists? Summarily put, the answer seems to be that if what has been assumed is the theoretical as well as the practical validity of ethical theism, there has been a begging of the question, whereas if what has been assumed is simply the practical value but not the theoretical validity of ethical theism, what we have is a clear case of *non sequitur*. Here again, however, the situation may be such as to support the opinion that the religious values are what they might reasonably be expected to be if the God of ethical theism were an existent reality. And so, once more, what we have is not a logical demonstration, but at the most one fairly good point in an argument for the reasonableness of belief, and even that only on the presupposition of a precariously broad pragmatism.

This and this only is the sort of validity which can be conceded to my argument for theism from moral optimism in *The Reasonableness of Christianity*. If one is a Christian theist, he must logically be a moral optimist. If he is a moral optimist, he may reasonably give favorable consideration to an ethical, or essentially Christian theism. If moral optimism is valid as an attitude, if its necessary presuppositions are true, reality is for essential practical purposes as it might reasonably be expected to be if the God of an essentially Christian faith did really exist. (In introducing this critical evaluation of the argument from moral optimism, I would not have it thought that when I wrote the book referred to I was really a dualistic realist in my religious epistemology. I was not; but as a *critical* monistic realist I accept the idea of a divine reality, only partly revealed within experience, and partly—indeed, very largely—transcendent. It is belief in the divine as empirically revealed and discovered that makes one a monistic realist in religion. Belief in phases of the divine reality which transcend our experience does not make one cease to be a monistic realist; only, when a *critical* monistic realist undertakes to state his *faith* concerning some of those transcendent aspects, he may learn from the dualists and may at times think and argue in ways which may have value for the mere phenomenalist and dualist as well as for himself.)

## Chapter XIV

### RELIGIOUS AGNOSTICISM

---

It has been pointed out in the preceding chapter that the most natural, obvious, and indeed logical conclusion to draw from dualistic epistemological premises is agnosticism. Existences inaccessible to human experience are likewise beyond human knowledge. This applies to things in general and to divine reality in particular, although it is a fact that many would subscribe to the agnostic doctrine in one of these realms and not in the other. Our present interest is in religious agnosticism, and we shall give our attention to three widely differing types of that position, represented respectively by Henry Mansel, Herbert Spencer, and the celebrated "father of modern theology," Friedrich Daniel Ernst Schleiermacher. (I have not included here any review of the religious epistemology of Immanuel Kant, such as might well have been looked for in view of its dominating influence on the thought of practically all the authors dealt with at any length in this and the next three chapters, the reasons for the omission being the general acquaintance of philosophical readers with the main features of the Kantian doctrine, and the fact that I have already paid my respects to the Kantian epistemology and philosophy of religion, respectively, in *The Problem of Knowledge*, 1915, Ch. II, and *The Pilgrimage of Faith*, 1931, Ch. IV.)

In the religious epistemology of Henry Mansel we have what amounts to the frankest religious agnosticism so far as the capacities of the self-dependent individual human mind are concerned, and this used as an apologetic for implicit faith in the traditional religious doctrine. In his general philosophical point of view Mansel was a follower of Sir William Hamilton, who had done so much to infect the earlier rudely healthy Scottish common-sense philosophy with the germs of the Kantian critical agnosticism. Even more emphatically than his master had done, Mansel insisted upon the impotence of the human intellect, even with the aid of all possible experience, to discover the nature of absolute or independent reality, which, it would seem, was somehow, in the thought of the philosopher, identified with God.

The reality of which we are conscious is not, according to Mansel, absolute reality (*Metaphysics*, 3rd ed., pp. 321-326). To begin with, the divine or absolute cannot be experienced. Mysticism, "professing to convey a knowledge of God by direct apprehension" through "a special faculty of knowledge," "a kind of religious sense," "of which God is the immediate object" is summarily rejected (*The Limits of Religious Thought*, 1859, pp. 71-72). But what is particularly insisted upon is that God, or Absolute Reality, is inconceivable; we cannot think of it without falling into self-contradiction. For instance, the Absolute cannot be a cause, even the First Cause, for a cause can only exist as such in relation to an effect, and the Absolute is that which does not stand in any necessary relation. If it be maintained that the Absolute is not a necessary but a free cause, this too leads to contradiction, for only a conscious being can be a free cause, and to be a conscious subject necessarily involves relation to an object; but to be necessarily related is to be conditioned, and so not absolute (*Ibid.*, pp. 75, 77, 78). To speak, therefore, of an Absolute as personal is simply to use language to which no mode of human thought can possibly attach itself (*Ibid.*, p. 103).

The more distinctly theological affirmations, moreover, are full of contradiction. "How can infinite power be able to do all things, and infinite goodness unable to do any evil? How can infinite justice exact the utmost penalty for every sin, and yet infinite mercy pardon the sinner? How can infinite wisdom know all the future and infinite freedom be at liberty to do or to forbear?" (*Ibid.*, pp. 79, 80). In short, there is contradiction in supposing that the Absolute exists, and there is contradiction in supposing that the Absolute (absolute reality) does not exist; contradiction in supposing it to be either one or many, personal or impersonal, active or inactive, the sum of all existence or a part of the sum (*Ibid.*, p. 85). "The Absolute and the Infinite are thus, like the Inconceivable and the Imperceptible, names indicating, not an object of thought or of consciousness at all, but the mere absence of the conditions under which consciousness is possible" (Quoted by Herbert Spencer, *First Principles*, Section 26). There can be no knowledge of things divine (*The Limits of Religious Thought*, p. 226). "If no one faculty of the human mind is competent to convey a direct knowledge of the Absolute or Infinite, no one faculty is entitled to claim pre-eminence over the rest, as furnishing especially the criterion of the truth or falsehood of a supposed Revelation. . . . The evidence derived from the internal character of a religion . . . is, as regards the divine origin of the religion, purely negative. It may prove in certain cases that a religion *has not* come from God; but it is in no case sufficient to prove that it *has* come from him" (*Ibid.*, pp. 205, 207). Mansel's posi-

tion is thus not only agnostic; it tends, in religious matters, to an extreme irrationalism and anti-conceptualism.

Mansel does not use his agnosticism and irrationalism, however, as an argument for religious unbelief or disbelief. On the contrary he uses his negative conclusions as reasons for accepting the traditional Christian beliefs. "The laws and limits of Reason" are put forth as a foundation for "the just claims of faith" (*Metaphysics*, p. 398). We are by no means "justified, even on philosophical grounds, in denying the personality of God. . . . It is only by conceiving Him as a Conscious Being that we can stand in any religious relation to Him at all; that we can form such a representation of Him as is demanded by our spiritual wants, insufficient though it be to satisfy our intellectual curiosity" (*The Limits of Religious Thought*, pp. 103, 104). "The doctrine is beyond the power of human reason to discover," to be sure, but "it can be accepted as resting on the authority of the teacher who proclaims it; and that authority itself must be guaranteed by the external evidence of a superhuman mission." "Exactly in proportion to the strength of the remaining evidence for the divine origin of a religion is the probability that we may be mistaken in supposing this or that portion of its contents to be unworthy of God" (*Ibid.*, pp. 208, 209). In Mansel's opinion, therefore, in view of the Scriptural teachings and the miracles attending their divine origin, "it is our duty to think of God as personal, and it is our duty to believe that he is infinite," even though "we cannot reconcile these two representations with each other." The contradiction may perhaps not exist "anywhere but in our own minds"; it may not indicate "any impossibility in the absolute nature of God." The "apparent contradiction . . . proves that there are limits to man's power of thought, and it proves no more" (*Ibid.*, p. 106).

Mansel's position is very evidently one of unstable equilibrium. There are not many, one would suppose, who can be counted upon steadily to believe propositions which they know to be mutually contradictory. An ordinary decent regard for logic would have compelled Mansel either to give up his Christian belief, or to revise his own epistemology. We have no quarrel with his assumption that Christian faith in God is a spiritual necessity and therefore a moral duty, if and in so far as it is possible within the limits of honest, logical thinking; but that is because we do not share his views as to the "limits of religious thought." His first fatal mistake lay in his assumption that man can have no experience of the object of his religious faith. This assumption that we can have no experience of God is then transformed into a partial definition of God as that of which we can have no experience. God, so thought of, is then identified with the Absolute, that which stands in absolute contrast with the relative, or related; so that

logically God, or the Absolute, is that which cannot be either experienced or thought of—a self-contradiction which should have warned our philosopher that he was on the wrong track. His concept of God, or the Absolute, is a confused and self-refuting concept of something which not only could neither be experienced nor thought of, but which could not even possibly exist, either as a Whole inclusive of particulars (to which it would necessarily be related, as including them) or as a member of a more inclusive Whole (to the other members of which it would of necessity be related). It is thus the agnostic and self-contradictory definition of God, or the Absolute, which is responsible for the sceptical conclusion that God is for human thought inconceivable. But from the beginning it might have been anticipated that it would be found impossible to conceive satisfactorily that which, or the like of which, we can never experience; and, of course, no one should expect to find any good reason for believing in that which by definition could not even exist. Mansel's dualistic epistemology, taken over from Kant by way of Hamilton, thus led him not only to agnosticism but virtually also to a self-stultifying irrationalism. The obvious interpretation of his clever dialectic is that it is the conclusive *reductio ad absurdum* of his own philosophical presuppositions.

But back of all Mansel's definitely philosophical presuppositions was his theological presupposition of the truth of the dogmas and traditions of authoritarian, supernaturalistic Protestantism. Outrunning Kant in both movements of his thought, he made the alleged absolute destruction of religious knowledge the ground upon which to reconstruct his extremely dogmatic theological faith. Herbert Spencer, however, finding himself in a similar philosophical position, chose the other alternative and drew the opposite conclusion.

Herbert Spencer retained the Kantian dualism and agnosticism as it came to him through Hamilton and Mansel, and by combining with it certain other contemporary influences of which we shall next speak, he rejected not only the dogmatic and obscurantist theology of Mansel; unable to see any compelling reason for accepting even the bare theistic postulate which Kant had based upon the moral consciousness, he rejected that also. Determined to be consistent in his religious agnosticism, he became the prophet of agnostic religion.

The other potent contemporary influences which gave direction to Spencer's thought were the positivism of Comte, the phenomenistic empiricism of John Stuart Mill and others, the Darwinian evolutionism, and the scientific agnosticism of T. H. Huxley. There was of course much more to Comte's positivism than a religious and metaphysical agnosticism. In his methodology Comte was, we may concede, more right

than wrong. Neither a purely dogmatic and largely mythological theology nor an abstract rationalistic metaphysics should be regarded as a satisfactory mould into which to cast the knowledge of reality which is accessible to man through experience. Only the inductive methods and the positive results of the empirical sciences can serve as an adequate check upon the too easy dogmatizing of theology and the speculative vagaries of metaphysics. Theology must and indeed can, as we have seen, become to some extent one of the positive, empirical sciences; and metaphysics, whatever else it may have the right to attempt, must include and do full justice in its synthesis to the assured general results of all the sciences, empirical theology included. But there was in Comte's own world-view no place for religious knowledge in the accepted sense of the word religion; his philosophy was the one which commended itself to him as best subserving his purpose to substitute a social morality without experimental religion for a religion which had largely lost its original connection with social morality.

John Stuart Mill's rather positivistic phenomenalism did not keep him from a final wavering and still almost agnostic confession of faith, to the effect that "there is evidence, but insufficient for proof and amounting only to one of the lower degrees of probability . . . [which] points to the creation, not indeed of the universe, but of the present order of it, by an intelligent Mind, whose power over the materials was not absolute, whose love for his creatures was not his sole actuating inducement, but who nevertheless desired their good" (*Three Essays on Religion*, New York, 1874, pp. 242-243). The agnostic spirit of the original positivistic empiricism is better represented by such expressions as this from G. H. Lewes:

"There is no logical contradiction in the existence of a spirit world in all its features entirely unlike the sensible world. We cannot say that such a world is impossible; we can only say that, if it exist, it is to us inaccessible, because to become accessible it must pass into the sphere of the sensible, and in the passage will cease to be suprasensible" (*Problems of Life and Mind*, Trübner, 1874-75, p. 248).

But probably first and foremost among the influences which, from Spencer's own point of view, contributed to make him an agnostic in religion was the frame of mind induced by witnessing the increasing success and prestige of the positive sciences, especially biology, in the face of the futile opposition and growing discomfiture of theological dogmatism. This was the situation which, apart from any professional or special interest in philosophy, led T. H. Huxley to a position to describe which he coined the term "agnosticism," and which finally induced

Charles Darwin to write, when asked concerning his religious beliefs, "The safest conclusion seems to me to be that the whole subject is beyond the scope of man's intellect" (*Life and Letters of Charles Darwin*, edited by F. Darwin, Appleton, 1898-99, Vol. I, p. 307).

In discussing ultimate religious ideas, Spencer takes up, among other questions, that of the origin of the universe. He finds, with reference to this problem, three verbally intelligible propositions, namely, that the universe is self-existent, that it is self-created, and that it has been created by some external agency. These are the solutions offered by atheism, pantheism, and theism, respectively. All of these propositions Spencer rejects, however, as being alike inconceivable. We can conceive, he maintains, neither existence without beginning nor potential existence passing into actual existence by inherent necessity nor the making of something without the use of any materials. The theistic solution, moreover, simply pushes the problem a step farther back, for the question would immediately arise with reference to the Creator, Is *he* self-existent, or self-created, or created by some external agency? (*First Principles*, Sections 11, 14). But, Spencer goes on, there is a problem here for human thought, even if there is for us no possible solution. We are obliged to regard every phenomenon as a manifestation of some power by which we are acted upon, and it is this consciousness of an incomprehensible Power, called omnipotent from our inability to assign its limits, which is the truly religious essence, Spencer thinks, of all positive religions (*Ibid.*, Sections 14, 27, 28). Spencer's philosophy is a dualistic, or as he calls it, a transfigured realism. Possible objects of thought may be divided into two classes, the realm of phenomena, the knowable, and the transcendent realm, the Unknowable. The former is the proper sphere of science, while the latter may be left to religion. The reconciliation of science and religion will be consummated when both become modestly agnostic on all ultimate metaphysical questions (*Ibid.*, Section 30). The ultimate conceptions of both science and religion must be recognized as having only symbolic validity. As against Mansel, Spencer claims that it is our duty neither to affirm nor to deny the personality of the Absolute (*Ibid.*, Section 31).

A real refutation of agnosticism is not to be accomplished by merely pointing out that some possible knowledge of ultimate reality is assumed in the very assertion that it is unknowable, that one would have to know a good deal about reality if he was to know whether it was knowable or not. Spencer himself virtually acknowledged as much, and in speaking of "an infinite and eternal Energy from which all things proceed," made bold to use the concept of causation beyond the bounds of all possible human experience. What he denies is the possibility of that further knowledge of ultimate reality in which both philosophy and practical

religion are interested. In so far as agnosticism is an undogmatic waiting to be convinced that knowledge of ultimate reality, and of divine reality in particular, should be thought of as a real possibility, it cannot be said to be sufficiently met except as a positive theory of perceptual and judgmental knowledge has been outlined and successfully defended, at least to the extent of showing that such objections as are made against it are lacking in validity. For an indication of the principal features of what we take to be such a philosophy we may refer back to Chapters Eleven and Twelve. On the other hand, in so far as religious agnosticism is a positive assertion that the reality in which characteristic religion is specifically interested is unknowable, it should be sufficient to recall that Spencer, the typical religious agnostic, has simply had the courage to carry out more frankly and consistently the implications of Mansel's quite unnecessary presupposition that the religious object, God, divine reality, is that of which we can never have experience and concerning which we can never think without self-contradiction. To point out the dogmatism of these unproved fundamental assumptions is virtually to destroy the supposed *logical* foundation for positive agnosticism. Psychologically, the basis of the agnostic conclusion may be temporary intellectual confusion, or even the will to disbelieve.

Spencer is a little too free not only with the word "unknowable" but perhaps especially with its twin term, "inconceivable." We must already have a vague concept of anything to be able to pronounce it inconceivable. We have to accept reality as we find it, and in doing so it is our business to conceive it. In spite of the old-fashioned mechanistic determinism we are learning to conceive the emergence of novelty, creative freedom, and the like, and it is no irrationalism but a rational extension of empiricism to entertain the idea that the world was created by Another, and that that Other either was self-created "in the beginning" or else has always been self-existent and self-dependent. In our own self-determination we are acquainted with limited self-creation and self-dependence.

There are passages in Schleiermacher's works which, taken by themselves, would seem to give promise of epistemological monism and realism in religion, with the possibility of an objectively verifiable theology which such a theory of knowledge, once established, would open up. For example, in the *Speeches on Religion* we are told that the "true nature of religion is . . . immediate consciousness of the Deity as He is found in ourselves and in the world" (*On Religion*, tr. by Oman, Kegan Paul, 1893, p. 101). In *The Christian Faith* too we are reminded that "in religion we find ourselves in immediate relation with God. . . . God is immediately given in the feeling of absolute dependence" (*The Christian*



*Faith*, Eng. tr. by H. R. Mackintosh et al., Scribners, 1928, Sections 3, 4; G. Cross, *The Theology of Schleiermacher*, Univ. of Chicago Press, 1911, p. 122). Again it is asserted that "all pious emotions exhibit through feeling the immediate presence of God in us" (Note to *Glaubenslehre*, 3-5; W. B. Selbie, *Schleiermacher*, Dutton, 1913, p. 48).

When we take these statements in their context, however, we begin to suspect that all that is intended to be taught is a religious realism which may be compatible with a very extensive agnosticism. The term, God, it is explained, is "used only to designate the *Whence* of our spontaneous and receptive life, of which we become aware in our feeling of absolute dependence" (*The Christian Faith*, Section 4:4; Cross, *op. cit.*, p. 122). "We necessarily posit absolute causality in God as that from which the feeling of absolute dependence is the reflection in our self-consciousness" (*Op. cit.*, Section 51; Cross, p. 165), and "the immediate presence of God in us" is explained as meaning simply the divine existence in relation to that object upon which the divine causality is active (See Selbie, *op. cit.*, p. 48).

But Schleiermacher's position is removed still further from a monistic religious realism by the fact that in his view it is only through the world that God acts upon us. "The religious man," according to the *Speeches*, "must at least be conscious of his feelings as the immediate product of the universe." "Your feeling is piety in so far as it is the result of the operation of God in you by means of the operation of the world upon you" (*On Religion*, Eng. tr., pp. 45, 90).

This can only be interpreted as meaning either pantheism or dualism in religious epistemology, with its resulting agnosticism; and as a matter of fact, Schleiermacher has to confess that he oscillates between the two. On the one hand we have statements strongly suggestive of pantheism:

"God is unity with the exclusion of all contrasts; the world is unity with inclusion of all contrasts" (*Dialektik*, p. 433; R. Munro, *Schleiermacher*, Paisley, 1903, p. 213).

"The contemplation of the pious is the immediate consciousness of the universal existence of all finite things in and through the Infinite and of all temporal things in and through the Eternal. . . . Religion is a life in the infinite nature of the Whole, in the One and in the All, in God, having and possessing all things in God and God in all" (*On Religion*, p. 36).

"For us the absolute divine causality finds its full expression in the totality of the forces of nature" (*The Christian Faith*, Section 51; Cross, p. 166). "In the religious consciousness all experience is referred to the absolute causality of God" (*Ibid.*, Section 79; Cross, p. 188).

"Divine preservation, as the absolute dependence of all events and changes on God, and natural causation, as the complete determination of all events by the universal nexus, are one and the same thing simply from different points of view. . . . If any one should detect in this an appearance of Pantheism, he ought to bear in mind that so long as philosophy does not put forward a generally accepted formula to express the relation of God and the world, even in Dogmatics . . . *we cannot avoid an oscillation between formulas, on the one hand, which approach to the identification of the two, and formulas, on the other, which go near to putting them in opposition to one another*" (*The Christian Faith*, Section 46; cf. *On Religion*, pp. 36, 97ff; Lichtenberger, *History of German Theology*, tr. by W. Hastie, T. & T. Clark, 1889, p. 147; Selbie, *op. cit.*, p. 111).

On the other hand there are many passages which show the agnostic influence of the Kantian dualistic epistemological background. For example:

"An announcement of God cannot be of him as he is in himself, but only of him in his relation to us" (*The Christian Faith*, Section 10; Cross, p. 134).

"A doctrine of God is not to be viewed as a description of God in himself, for *we possess no objective knowledge of God*" (Cross, p. 164).

"Otherwise than by the emotions produced in us by the world, we do not claim to have God in our feelings, and consequently I have not said more of Him. If you will not admit that this is to have God and to be conscious of Him, I can neither teach nor guide you farther" (*On Religion*, p. 94).

In this last excerpt the epistemological dualism of the immediately experienced content of cosmic emotion and the inaccessible independently existing God is especially pronounced.

From this point of view theology, in so far as it is scientific, cannot be a science of the independently existing religious Object, but only a science of the religious subject, "a description of subjective states of mind" (Cross, p. 141). As a science it is the scientific exposition of a particular religious faith. Strictly speaking, it is not theology at all, but merely a branch of anthropology, or more specifically, of the history, psychology and sociology of religion; in particular, a description of the religious beliefs of a special religious fellowship at a particular moment in its religious history. Christian theology as scientific is fundamentally psychology of the Christian religion, with special attention to the intellectual expression of religious faith. Thus, while theology sets out to be

God-centered, theocentric, in Schleiermacher's hands it turns out to be, as scientific, purely anthropocentric, centered in man. The only necessary modification of this statement would be that this so-called "theology" is also a normative discipline, inasmuch as it must be adapted to the purpose of church-guidance (*Brief Outline of the Study of Theology*, Eng. tr., 1850, Sections 1, 5, 198). There is a different scientific "theology" for every different mode of faith, and even for every party within the Church (*Ibid.*, Sections 2, 98). Christian theology is historico-psychological and at the same time a normative "science of the combination of the doctrines which are valid in a Christian church communion at a given time" (*The Christian Faith*, Section 19; Cross, p. 143). It is a branch of history or of psychology with normative characteristics (*Brief Outline of the Study of Theology*, Section 11), "the connected exhibition of the system of doctrine as currently received at any given time, whether by the church in general, or by any distinct ecclesiastical party" (*Ibid.*, Section 97). For Schleiermacher himself, dogmatic theology is not knowledge of *God*, but "the knowledge of the *doctrine* now current in the Evangelical Church" (*Ibid.*, Section 195).

We have said that Schleiermacher's Kantian dualism led to a fundamental agnosticism, with the consequence that his theology was so infected with subjectivity as to take on an anthropocentric character, in place of the theocentrism which in the nature of the case should characterize any theology. Schleiermacher has much to say of the God-consciousness, which he uses almost as an equivalent for religious feeling, so that we may assume that his religion was, at least intentionally, theocentric, even if he felt that his theology, in order to be scientific, must be anthropocentric. But theology, while primarily the product of religion, rests upon the faith that produced it, and it is a fair question whether Schleiermacher's own religious consciousness was not impaired in some degree by his very subjective theology. When we examine some of the main theological doctrines in Schleiermacher's system, we begin to realize something of what the subjective, anthropocentric method does to religion.

Revelation for Schleiermacher is not a manifestation of God as he is in himself, but any original feeling produced by the universe in man (*On Religion*, p. 89; *The Christian Faith*, Section 10).

Miracle is "simply the religious name for an event," that is, the name of any event which may happen to call forth a religious feeling and interpretation. "Every event, even the most natural and usual, becomes a miracle as soon as the religious view of it becomes prominent." Consequently, to the very religious it may come to pass that nothing happens which is not miraculous. In the absence of religious feeling, however, miracles do not happen (*On Religion*, pp. 88-90, 113-114).

Faith is described not as an objective relation to the religious Object, but merely as a state of the religious subject, an inner certitude accompanying a condition of the higher self-consciousness, a sense of freedom from the need of redemption (*The Christian Faith*, Section 11; Cross, p. 139).

With regard to the person of Christ, such expressions are countenanced as, "God was in Christ," and even, "In the Redeemer God became man." But this language is not to be taken as implying any special subjective presence or activity of God in the life of Christ. What is meant is simply that the *God-consciousness* was in Christ "continually and exclusively determining every moment" and making him consequently the archetype for human religion (*The Christian Faith*, Section 94; Cross, pp. 202, 208, 216). "We cannot speak with truth of the presence of God in any man, but only of his presence in the world" (*Ibid.*; Cross, p. 204). God was no more objectively in Christ than Christ is objectively present in the Christian (*Ibid.*; Cross, p. 214).

The prophetic work of Christ is rightly enough represented as consisting in the communication to others of his God-consciousness, and redemption is rightly identified with the transition to a state in which, through influences historically and psychologically mediated from the historic Jesus, the God-consciousness assumes dominance over all the activities of the life (*The Christian Faith*, Sections 28, 29; Cross, pp. 151, 213, 219).

"Communion with God" is not to be interpreted as any objective reciprocal relation with God, but simply as a purely inward state of religious feeling; not the result of any direct communication from God, but simply the "effect of a communication proceeding [historically] from Jesus Christ" (*Ibid.*, Section 64; Cross, p. 176). Similarly, the distinction between what is and what is not operation of divine grace is purely subjective; all depends upon the interpretation and the religious feeling from which it springs, and so the whole life of the pious is, to himself, a continuous series of operations of divine grace (*On Religion*, p. 90).

Regeneration and sanctification are effects, not in any special sense produced by God, but produced by the Christian God-consciousness, which originated with Christ and is mediated to the individual by the Christian community (*Ibid.*, Section 106; Cross, pp. 227, 229). The Holy Spirit is simply the holy human spirit characteristic of the Christian religious fellowship, the common spirit of all those who are sanctified (*Ibid.*, Sections 121-125; Cross, pp. 244-249).

Finally, the attributes of God are not qualities known to apply objectively to God as he is in himself, but simply the outward reflection of the different human feelings and points of view which, through the action of the universe upon man, associate themselves with the feeling of abso-

lute dependence (*Ibid.*, Sections 166-168; Cross, p. 285). As for the existence of God, no argument can prove it; the only but sufficient substitute for demonstration is to be found in pointing to the universality of the feeling of absolute dependence (*Ibid.*, Section 33).

It was not without good reason that Schleiermacher was recognized for three or four generations as "the father of modern theology." He stood boldly for the autonomy of the religious consciousness, as against the encroachments of one-sided intellectualistic philosophy and the unscientific dogmatism of men of science. He saw clearly that religion was fundamentally a matter of inner experience, and sought justifiably to restore the claims of religious feeling, in distinction from current tendencies to define religion primarily in either intellectualistic or moralistic terms. He was right in looking past all theistic argument for a foundation for belief in God, to the inescapable fact of man's ultimate dependence. He rightly emphasized the value of the faith of the vitally religious community as a corrective of the vagaries of individual religious consciousness. And above all, he made many great and lasting contributions to theology in his *magnum opus*, *Die Glaubenslehre*, a genuine normative science of the Christian faith.

But in all this Schleiermacher paid the penalty of the pioneer. He exaggerated the autonomy of religion, not recognizing sufficiently that, like all other autonomy, it could be but relative: the religious consciousness has need of science and of a rational-empirical philosophy and ethics for the correction of what without them would be the vagaries of its subjective intuition. Moreover, the definition of the essence of religion in terms of feeling, to the exclusion of belief and action, was one-sided: religious feeling without concepts would be blind, and without active adjustment and overt expression in conduct, something far less meaningful and worthwhile than it really is. To point to the universality of the feeling of absolute dependence is but the beginning of a reasonable theistic faith, which must go on to answer the question as to how, in the face of "the oppositions of science falsely so-called" and the confusions of "philosophy and vain deceit," the man of religious intuition can "be ready always to give a reason to everyone that asketh" for the faith and hope that are in him. Appeal to the religious consciousness of the social religious fellowship for correction or confirmation of individual expressions of faith or opinion is good, so far as it goes; but the fact that there are so many different, fairly well unified faiths characteristic of different religions and different churches drives us beyond that social criterion to seek a standard in empirical verification and a rational vindication in philosophy. And finally, a normative science of Christian faith does very well for the guidance of religion, provided it subserves a religious consciousness amply assured of the objective and independent reality of God. But one's theology

should be equally theocentric with one's religion, and this, in the light of what we have seen of the details of his doctrinal formulations, Schleiermacher's anthropocentric science of the Christian religious consciousness emphatically was not. Hans Vaihinger was mistaken, but not entirely without excuse, when he interpreted Schleiermacher's *Glaubenslehre* as having been *consciously* constituted of "indispensable fictions" (*The Philosophy of As If*, Eng. tr., pp. 28f., 130, 328).

It is a rather nice question, and one not altogether without its practical bearings, whether Schleiermacher's religious epistemology is more or less subjective than the Kantian position. On the one hand there is the Kantian assertion that certain theological beliefs are true, or should at least be so believed, because it is universally necessary for moral living and well-being that men should believe and act as if they were true. On the other hand we have the assumption characteristic of Schleiermacher, that a certain theology is true, or at least properly to be accepted as true or as if true, because a certain associated group of individuals, of which one happens to be a member, feels with him that it is true. On the one hand, then, there is what seems to be a universally obligatory but unverified hypothesis; on the other hand, an hypothesis which cannot be shown to be universally obligatory, but which is accompanied, in the consciousness of certain associated individuals, by an inner experience or intuition which seems to themselves to amount to verification, but which cannot be shown to have any compelling logical evidential value outside that particular religious communion. Both stand in need of objective, empirical verification if they are to be recognized as being, to any extent, in the full sense of the word, religious *knowledge*. (For a careful and detailed criticism of Schleiermacher's religious epistemology, the special student is referred to the as yet unpublished dissertation of Richard B. Brandt, *The Problem of Knowledge in Schleiermacher's Philosophy*, deposited in the Yale University Library in 1936.)

## Chapter XV

### RELIGIOUS VALUE-JUDGMENTS

---

Undoubtedly the theologian who along with Schleiermacher was most widely influential in the Protestant world during the last three decades of the nineteenth century and in the twentieth century up to the time of the World War was Albrecht Ritschl. As was the case with Schleiermacher, there was in Ritschl's religious and intellectual history an initial transition from an inherited conservative evangelicalism to a radical rationalism, followed by a new appreciation of the nature of religion and religious knowledge, which led to a vigorous reaction against intellectualism in religion and in the direction of a general conservatism in doctrinal theology. In the rationalistic period the still current Hegelianism was the dominant factor; in the reaction against this intellectualism Kant and Schleiermacher were influential. In the shape in which his views were given to the world one discovers marks of the influence of his philosophical colleague at Göttingen, Lotze.

Ritschl acknowledges indebtedness to Schleiermacher with respect to method (*Theologie und Metaphysik*, 2nd. ed., p. 54, or 3rd. ed., p. 81). The chief points in common are: the claim, or assumption, of the autonomy of the religious consciousness; the dependence upon Christian religious feeling as a basis for dogmatics; the protest against the mingling of philosophical and religious knowledge; the metaphysical agnosticism, making the content of theology mainly Christology and soteriology, rather than theology proper; the consequent anthropocentric rather than theocentric character of the system, at least in so far as it claims to be scientific; and finally, the normative value attached to the consciousness of the religious community. Yet Ritschl was very critical of Schleiermacher and probably underestimated his indebtedness to his great predecessor. In a letter he wrote, "I doubt if Schleiermacher represents any absolute advance beyond all that went before him, and especially beyond Kant" (*Albrecht Ritschls Leben*, by Otto Ritschl, Vol. II. p. 82). He felt that Schleiermacher, in basing religion solely upon the subjective consciousness of the Christian community, instead of upon the objective Christian revelation, was guilty of the old error of making the doctrine of God a natural

in distinction from a revealed theology (*Theologie und Metaphysik*, p. 65, or p. 92). The chief differences then between the two were, first, that Ritschl made will as well as feeling basic in theology, or in other words undertook a synthesis of Kant with Schleiermacher; and second, that he proceeded, or at least aimed to proceed, primarily from "the Gospel," instead of from the religious self-consciousness (Cf. F. Kattenbusch, *Von Schleiermacher zu Ritschl*, p. 59).

It would be a mistake, however, to minimize the importance of Ritschl's agreement with Schleiermacher in making theology the expression of Christian feeling. For Ritschl as for Schleiermacher, apart from the religious consciousness philosophy must remain agnostic concerning God. For Schleiermacher theology is the expression of the religious feeling of the Christian community, which Christian religious feeling originated historically with Jesus and was communicated by him to his Church, through which it comes to us; for Ritschl theology is the expression of the moral religious feeling of the Christian community, as it responds to the historic Christ as revelation of God. In both cases "religious knowledge," that is, the intellectual expression of religious intuition, is distinguished from science, philosophy, and theoretical knowledge generally, which is summarily dismissed as everywhere entirely incompetent in the sphere of religion.

That it is not easy to find the proper classification for Ritschl's epistemological views is indicated by the various conflicting views of interpreters as to just what his theory of knowledge, and especially of religious knowledge, was. Was he an epistemological monist and idealist? Bender, Luthardt, Frank, Stählin, Pflieger, Orr and Pfennigsdorf are among those who have thought so. Was he a Kantian epistemological dualist? He himself said not; he criticized the Kantian notion of a *Ding-an-sich*, as involving self-contradiction, and claimed to follow Lotze in holding that we know reality *in* phenomena, as *cause*, *end*, and the *laws* of change. But unlike Lotze, he was sceptical of the possibility of speculative metaphysics, and many interpreters are dubious as to how much of an anti-Kantian Lotzian he really was. Schoen says he was more a disciple of Kant than of Lotze (*Les origines historiques de la théologie de Ritschl*, p. 34); Traub contends that he was a "genuine Kantian" ("Ritschls Erkenntnistheorie," *Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche*, IV, 1894, pp. 91 ff.), and his own son, Otto Ritschl, declares that his father agreed with Lotze only in so far as Lotze agreed with Kant (*Albrecht Ritschls Leben*, Vol. II, p. 391). It is significant that as a movement Ritschlianism has been much closer to Kant in its epistemology and in its attitude toward metaphysics than to Lotze. And yet on the other hand it must not be forgotten that such devoted Ritschlians as Traub and Otto Ritschl were themselves *neo*-Kantians,



i.e. non-dualistic Kantians (at least in relation to the physical world), Kantians without the *Ding-an-sich*. Finally, there are those who would classify Ritschl as a "vulgar realist," holding that "things-in-themselves are as they are for us" (A. E. Garvie, *The Ritschlian Theology*, T. & T. Clark, 1899, pp. 45, 53), or, if not quite that, an intuitional realist, maintaining not only the independent reality of God but the possibility also of knowing him in an act of imaginative, or synthetic intuition (E. W. Lyman, "Ritschl's Theory of Value Judgments," *Journal of Religion*, V, 1925, pp. 500-518).

How shall we explain this diversity of opinion as to what Ritschl's epistemology really was? Does the fault lie with Ritschl or with his interpreters? One writer who has investigated the subject (W. C. Keirstead, *The Metaphysical Presuppositions of Ritschl*) explains the varying interpretations as due to the different philosophical views of the critics themselves. There may be something in this, but we cannot completely absolve Ritschl himself from responsibility for the uncertainty and confusion. He was a great theologian, but not so great as a philosopher. It is probably true, as Pfleiderer suggests (*The Development of Theology*, Macmillan, 1890, p. 183), that his theory of knowledge was not made the basis of his theology from the first, but was propounded subsequently for its defense. Rightly dissatisfied with the Kantian dualistic agnosticism as an epistemological basis for interpreting the religious conception of revelation (Cf. Wendland, *Albrecht Ritschl und seine Schüler*, p. 22), he attempted, as Ecke puts it, "to lean upon Lotzian ways of thinking," with the result that his theory of knowledge "takes up into itself elements of ideas which are thoroughly foreign to the original intentions of the Ritschlian theology" (G. Ecke, *Die theologische Schule Albrecht Ritschls*, Vol. I, p. 143).

In facing the necessity of hazarding an opinion on the very controversial topic of Ritschl's epistemology I would begin by recalling that it was for the securing of the "positive and proper character" of theology (*Justification and Reconciliation*, Eng. tr. of Vol. III, by Mackintosh and Macaulay, Edinburgh, T. & T. Clark, 1902, p. 17), as made up solely of religious judgments, propositions of faith, that Ritschl was concerned. He sought to eliminate from Christian church doctrine all alien content, whether of ancient or recent introduction, to retain all content essential to the expression and guidance of evangelical piety, and to restore to the believer, in affirming that content, the certitude which flows from religious experience. It is with this practical motivation that Ritschl points out that the elements of our experience are either described and explained in their relations to other elements (causally, for instance), or appreciated according to the value they are felt to have for the self (*Ibid.*, pp. 203, 204). These mental processes are expressed in theoretical, or existential judg-

ments and in value-judgments, respectively.\* Ritschl distinguishes two main classes of the latter, namely concomitant value-judgments and independent value-judgments. Concomitant value-judgments accompany the theoretical judgments of science and affirm the worth of this knowledge won by observation (*Ibid.*, pp. 204, 207). Among independent value-judgments are included moral and religious judgments. Religious value-judgments express man's relation to the world, especially the joy of emancipation from the dominion of the world (as vouchsafed by God) or the conscious need of divine help to gain dominion over the world (*Ibid.*, pp. 205, 206). Closely associated with this is man's assurance, gained through religious experience, of his own greater value than all phenomenal reality (*Ibid.*, pp. 17, 211, 223; *Theologie und Metaphysik*, p. 9 or p. 33).

One of the most clearly typical instances of a religious value-judgment is that as to the divinity of Christ, which expresses the Christian's appreciation of the worth of the historic person through whom the religious experience of salvation (emancipation from the world) was effected (*Justification and Reconciliation*, p. 398. This appreciation of Jesus as a truly human personality, whose work has for us a truly divine value, was developed at length by one of Ritschl's first disciples, Hermann Schultz, in his *Die Lehre von der Gottheit Christi*). All valid doctrines of theology proper are also, at bottom, according to Ritschl, religious value-judgments. They lie beyond the horizon of ordinary metaphysics, for all that can be known of God is ever only what he is for us (*Justification and Reconciliation*, pp. 17, 225). The interpretation of moral evil as sin, because opposed to the will of God, is also a religious value-judgment (*Ibid.*, p. 334).

In the light of the foregoing our hypothesis as to Ritschl's theory of religious knowledge is this: Finding no proper basis for theology in either speculative metaphysics or empirical science, and feeling the inadequacy of a theology postulated on the basis of the moral consciousness as compared with the richness of religious content of the traditional Christian revelation-faith, Ritschl turned his attention once more to the world of nature and man, past and present, which was undoubtedly accessible to scientific investigation, and which might be understood epistemologically

\* The distinction between these two types of judgment had already been recognized by Kant, Herbart, Schleiermacher, DeWette, and Lotze. The term "value-judgment," however, was not used by any of these philosophers, nor even by Ritschl himself in the first (1874) edition of his third volume of *Justification and Reconciliation*, although he there dimly introduces the *idea* of the religious value-judgment. The term was used by Herrmann in 1879 and by Kaftan, in his *Essence of the Christian Religion*, in 1881. Ritschl, in a review of Kaftan's book, takes up the term and introduces it into his own work in the second edition, published in 1883 (M. Reischle, *Werturteile und Glaubensurteile*, pp. 10 f.). Reischle cites as the earliest known instance of the employment of the term "value-judgment" (without the qualifying adjective "religious"), its use by Pokorný in 1869, by Rümelin in 1871, and by Olawsky in 1873.

either from the point of view of the neo-Kantian theory (Kantianism without the unknowable *Ding-an-sich*) or from that of Lotze "in so far as Lotze agreed with Kant." The problem now was whether a place might not be found for religious knowledge as a different way of knowing "the same object, namely the world" (*Ibid.*, p. 203), which, as accessible to sense-experience, was knowable descriptively in the theoretical or existential judgments of science.

The answer came in terms of appreciation of religious value, which, like moral and other evaluations of accessible reality, might be regarded as knowledge, though in a different sense of the word from that given it in science. This seemed satisfactory so long as the religious judgments were concerned with the religious evaluation of such accessible entities as man, moral evil, and the historic Jesus. Religious value-judgments affirming the sinfulness of man, salvation (spiritual emancipation) mediated through the historic Jesus and the spiritual life of his Church, and the divinity (functional divineness) of Jesus Christ, could be justified as religious knowledge in this valuational sense. Whether as idealist or as realist, one could be an epistemological monist with regard to such divine reality. It is present within the experienced world, immediately revealed and accessible to religious appreciation.

But the situation was different when attention was turned to those other elements of Christian faith and theology which were concerned with the transcendent aspects of Deity. "In religion the thought of God is given," and "all religion is equivalent to an explanation of the course of the world . . . in the sense that the sublime spiritual powers (or the spiritual power) which rule in or over it conserve and confirm to the personal spirit its claims and its independence over against the restrictions of nature and the natural effects of human society" (*Ibid.*, p. 17). What can be said, as "religious knowledge," about the transcendent, personal creator-God, traditionally set forth in Christian doctrine as good enough and great enough for our absolute trust? Bender interpreted Ritschl's doctrine as meaning that the idea of such a God is a mere product of the struggle for self-maintenance, a concept which has instrumental value and which for that reason may be used, but one which is not to be understood as having any valid existential reference. But no unprejudiced student of Ritschl's thought can accept any such interpretation after reading what he has to say on such topics as "the personality of God" and "the eternity of God" (*Ibid.*, Sections 30, 37; Cf. Th. Haering, *Die Theologie und der Vorwurf der doppelten Wahrheit*, p. 27; Otto Ritschl, *Theologische Literaturzeitung*, 1893, p. 645; F. Traub, *Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche*, IV, 1894, pp. 111 f.). But at this point the epistemological scene apparently shifts to an essentially Kantian dualism. The transcendent God is the religious *Ding-an-sich*, beyond experience

and beyond possible knowledge, whether descriptive or appreciative, scientific or religious.

It is at this point that confusion enters into the Ritschlian epistemology. An attempt is made to stretch the religious-value-judgment theory so as to make it cover all religious judgments, and to continue to speak of all such judgments as "religious knowledge." An attempt is also made to justify assertions about the transcendent personal God of Christian faith by representing them as being involved somehow in the Christian religious evaluation of accessible phenomenal reality. If what is meant is that these assertions are logically involved in the value-judgments, the claim can hardly be justified; attempting it, we should find ourselves confronted once more with the dilemma of either a begging of the question or a *non sequitur*. H. Luedemann takes the critical theologians to task for vainly endeavoring to determine the nature of unexperienced reality by means of the value of the experienced, and then covering up their failure by making certain obscure statements about "revelation," whereas the critical philosophers speak only of transcendental ideals and are content to determine what values are valid by a further extension of our experience and knowledge of reality (*Das Erkennen und die Werturteile*, 1910, pp. 74-75). In so far as the question is one of logic and knowledge, his point is well taken—as against the epistemological dualist in religion.

But perhaps what is intended by Ritschl himself is not that the existence of a transcendent God is logically implied in the value-judgments of religion, but rather, as Professor Lyman has contended (*loc. cit.*), that this is an "imaginative or synthetic intuition." If, however, that be the case—and the criticism will apply to Professor Lyman, I think, as well as to his interpretation of Ritschl—this does not mean that the position is legitimately an immediate, direct, or monistic form of religious realism; the duality remains between the experienced and the independently real; the intuition in question is not perceptual, but merely imaginal; its subjective certitude amounts not to knowledge but at best to an assured and reasonable faith.

It is true enough that anything claimed in the way of "revelation" is hopelessly obscure, as Luedemann charges, or even self-contradictory, so long as the epistemological background is a dualistic realism. When the antithesis between phenomenon and reality is made complete, as in epistemological dualism, in the nature of the case what appears cannot be independent reality; and independently existing reality, divine or other, can never appear. If appeal be made away from "the nature of the case" to the supernatural in the sense of the miraculous, the epistemological problem comes to be, first, that of finding out some sure criterion of the miraculous, and secondly, some way of passing with certainty from the miraculous to the divine. But Ritschl has no thought, apparently, of

appealing to miraculous revelation in this sense of the word; criticism of that conception may be reserved for use against certain other theologians to be mentioned later.

In view of the constructive position defended in Part III above, involving both the explicitly valuational and the explicitly existential character of theology, and in view of Ritschl's explicitly valuational and implicitly existential theology, we are inclined to exclaim: How near Ritschl came to the right solution of his problem! And yet how far away he was in the end! He objected strongly to "mixed articles" (philosophical and religious) in theology, yet he had nothing against a mixture of mutually discrepant theories, apparently, in his epistemology. He gave lip-service to a monistic epistemological idealism (or is it a combination of dualistic realism in epistemology with metaphysical idealism, after the manner of the personalistic followers of Lotze?—but Ritschl was against all constructive metaphysics). The necessary recognition of a *duality* between the transcendent aspects of Deity and the immanent or revealed phases, virtually becoming or threatening to become for Ritschl, with his Kantian background, an absolute dualism of the unexperienced, independently existing God and a purely subjective religious experience in a purely phenomenal world, is covered up by means of the device of the ambiguously valuational character of the religious judgment which begins by being an evaluation of the experienced, present or past, but ends by being an existential assertion about a transcendent personal God. It may be that this dubious procedure was helped out, as Lyman thinks, by an almost mystical intuitionism, yielding an approximation to a direct or monistic realism which is taken by Ritschl himself, as it seems to be by Lyman, to justify the use of the terms "revelation" and "religious knowledge" as applied to "the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ" as religious object. But if so, it should be recognized that the intuition in question is not perceptual but imaginal, that the monistic realism is consequently a mere dogma, and that the so-called "religious knowledge" is not knowledge in the scientific sense of empirically verified judgment, but would be more appropriately referred to as subjectively assured or intuitional faith.

In view of what was said in Part III above, it should be clear that what we would recommend as an alternative to Ritschl's epistemology is something very different, however close it may come to coinciding with his position at certain points. According to our theory we perceive processes in nature, history, and personal religious experience, which we rightly evaluate (apperceive appreciatively) as divine. But this, according to our realistic religious epistemology, is not all there is of the divine. We have an imaginal intuition of and believe in a unitary divine reality, partly transcendent and as we have perceived, partly immanent and revealed.

This intuition or faith we have subjected to practical and philosophical tests, and we continue to hold it as a pragmatically valuable and a reasonable faith. Furthermore, guided by this apparently reasonably tenable individual faith as our general theory or major hypothesis, we derive various minor hypotheses from it by deductive inference and proceed to test their truth in actual perceptual experience, inner and outer. In some instances we are able to gain for these minor hypotheses essentially scientific verification. To this extent then our imaginal intuition, or faith, becomes empirically verified or perceptual intuition, or what, without ambiguity, we may call religious knowledge. Moreover, as in knowledge and belief about reality in general, what we know about the object controls what we may reasonably believe about it, so here the spiritual values of the divine as immanent and revealed within the field of our experience and observation must be regarded as characterizing the unitary divine reality in which we believe, in its transcendent as well as in its immanent aspects. To this faith concerning the transcendent aspects of the religious object philosophical criticism and indeed some practical tests may properly be applied; but what is indicated is a theology which, both in so far as it is knowledge and in so far as it is but faith, is both explicitly valuational and explicitly existential. This is just what we ought to expect, if there exists a God, a Divine Reality, which is worthy of our absolute devotion and trust.

Adolf Harnack, the great historian of Christian dogma, reveals his fundamental agreement with Ritschl in his interpretation of historic Christianity as essentially ethico-religious and experiential, rather than metaphysically speculative and intellectualistic. Gnosticism he regards as the "acute secularizing of the Gospel," through the introduction of alien, non-religious elements in speculative theological metaphysics, while Greek orthodoxy was the result of a similar only more gradual process of Hellenization, secularization, and depotentiation (*What is Christianity?* Eng. tr., Putnam, 1901; *History of Dogma*, Eng. tr., Little, Brown, et al., 1897, Vol. I, pp. 222-262; Vol. II). There is, no doubt, much to be said for Harnack's emphasis upon the distinction between the vital religious essence of Christianity and the speculative metaphysical concepts in which it has often undertaken to express itself; but there are also good practical reasons for giving heed to the contrary, or perhaps we should say, complementary, reminder that while evangelism is of fundamental importance, "an intellectual system must follow it, or the whole effects of the movement must disappear" (W. R. Inge, Article, "Alexandrian Theology," in Hastings' *Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics*, Vol. I).

Otto Ritschl in general defends his father's point of view, but he has some corrections to suggest. Although interpreting Albrecht Ritschl's

theory of knowledge as essentially Kantian, as we have seen, he claims that he failed to get the right idea of Kant's doctrine; in other words, he was not enough of a neo-Kantian to suit his son (*Albrecht Ritschls Leben*, II, p. 391). Furthermore, the younger Ritschl, on the ground that his father never developed the value-judgment to any extent, undertakes to supplement the Ritschlian theology at that point (*Ueber Werturteile*, Leipzig, 1895, p. vi). A neo-Kantian to the extent of dispensing with the physical Ding-an-sich, but like most Ritschlians a dualistic Kantian in his religious epistemology, Otto Ritschl is concerned to develop the religious-value-judgment theory into a satisfactory philosophical basis for Christian theology. Starting from phenomenal reality alone, he seeks to use the religious value-judgment as a spring-board for his leap into the transcendental realm of faith.

There are two steps or stages in his procedure. First, he aims to show that theological judgments are more or less explicitly religious value judgments, and as such presumably permissible, so far as science is concerned. After that, in order to meet the charge of subjectivism commonly leveled at the Ritschlian system, he has to show that these same religious value-judgments are, at least implicitly, existential. Each of these special propositions he undertakes to establish by establishing the universal proposition from which it can be logically deduced. In other words, his twofold task comes to be, first, to show that all judgments are value-judgments, and, second, to show that all judgments, and so all value-judgments are likewise existential.

In arguing that all judgments are valuational, Otto Ritschl begins by calling attention to what he claims to be the fact, that no thought is completely destitute of a feeling accompaniment, although in scientific thought the *influence* of emotion has been practically eliminated. The ordinary thought of most persons, however, is highly emotional, and the judgments of childhood particularly are expressive of pleasure and pain, or, in other words, of the value of the objects for the individual. As a judgment is repeated many times, however, the feeling-accompaniment tends to become less and less, until at length emotionally colorless "customary judgments" take the place of the original value-judgments. Finally, when further abstraction is purposely made from the effect of the objects upon us, there result the "theoretical judgments" of science. The difference between value-judgments and theoretical judgments is thus one of degree rather than of kind (*Ibid.*, pp. 13-17, 34). Religious judgments, then, because of the prominence, at their genesis, of the emotional and volitional features as compared with the intellectual, are undoubtedly value-judgments (*Ibid.*, pp. 21, 34).

But with this conclusion only half of the projected task is completed. To guard against the impression that if religious judgments are value-

judgments they are not objectively valid, the contrast between value judgments and "existential judgments" is repudiated, as implying the nonsensical doctrine that value-judgments express non-existence. "All human beings regard as also genuine and real the objects which they perceive, and which in fact they first recognized in value-judgments." In truth, value-judgments are existential judgments, for in them we assume, as much as in theoretical judgments, the reality of the subjects to which we assign predicates. Not all value-judgments are true, to be sure; but they all *intend* to be true, and even the so-called "existential" judgments may be mistaken (*Ibid.*, pp. 22, 23, 35). By this argument, it is supposed, the problem of religious knowledge is solved: religious judgments are value-judgments, and so there can be no scientific objection to their being made; but they are also existential, and so when made with sufficiently critical care, they are objectively valid.

This apology for the Ritschlian epistemology leaves it, as we shall see, still vulnerable at many points. There are some things to be said for it, however. The functional distinction between the subject and the predicate of the judgment is such as to lend itself fairly well to the use Otto Ritschl makes of it; the subject-matter of judgment is some reality, or at least assumed reality, while the predicate expresses, whether primarily, as in "independent" value-judgments, or incidentally, as in "concomitant" value-judgments, the interest or value which the one judging finds in that assumed reality. For example, for Peter Bell

"A primrose by the river's brim  
A yellow primrose was to him,  
And it was nothing more";

in other words, a mere glance of recognition or the thought "yellow primrose" expressed all the value the flower had for Peter Bell, while for the poet himself even "the meanest flower that blows" could give thoughts that lay "too deep for tears." There is some sound psychology of the judging process in the younger Ritschl's brochure.

Moreover, *Ueber Werturteile* contains some positive contributions to, or approaches toward the solution of the problem it undertakes to consider. The distinction between emotional and theoretical judgments as one of degree is illuminating. A scientific empirical procedure in religion seems to be dimly foreshadowed in the claim (somewhat too dogmatically put forth) that the objects of religious faith meet all the practical tests of reality, so that religious judgments find verification in Christian experience, and persons of deep religious experience are often as sure of the objects of their faith as the scientist, who needs no special theoretical "proofs," is of the object of his science (*Ibid.*, pp. 23, 26, 32-33). In spite, however, of some slight gestures in the direction of a monistic realism,



Otto Ritschl's religious epistemology remains fundamentally dualistic. Our religious life rests in the last analysis, it is claimed, not upon experience of the religious object but upon an appreciation of the value of our faith itself (*Ibid.*, p. 20). It is urged that the objects of faith are beyond the reach of scientific denial (*Ibid.*, pp. 24-25), whereby it is suggested and virtually admitted that they are also beyond the reach of scientific theological affirmation. Religious knowledge, it is ambiguously confessed, is not universally valid (*Ibid.*, p. 27), although the weight of this somewhat damaging admission is relieved to some extent by the appeal for objectivity to the verdict of history as to the value of religion (*Ibid.*, pp. 28-33). In these respects, however, Otto Ritschl's position is typical of Ritschlianism in general.

As against some of this author's supposed contributions to the solution of the problem that he sets himself, there are several points of criticism to be urged. The more successful he is in obliterating the distinction between value-judgments and judgments of existence, the more insignificant his father's contribution at this point becomes. It is altogether too apologetic an apology when it is pointed out that the doctrine which has challenged criticism doesn't really mean much, if anything. But is it not by a somewhat too artful device that the appearance of a solution of the value-judgment problem is gained? On the one hand the name "value-judgment" is applied to all judgments which are perceptibly emotional, whereas its proper application is to such judgments as explicitly express the measurement of an object by some standard of value (See Luedemann, *op. cit.*, pp. 25ff). On the other hand, advantage is taken of the fact that existential judgments are commonly "theoretical," rather than emotional, and the problem taken up is that of relieving the contrast between value-judgments (interpreted as emotional judgments) and theoretical judgments, instead of the more stubborn opposition between judgments of value and judgments of existence. Moreover, the whole point of the remarks that value-judgments do not express non-existence, and that we assume the reality of all subjects to which we attach predicates, can be fully appreciated only from an idealistic or neo-Kantian point of view, such as would make the real subject of every judgment a previous thought-construct; but in his *religious* epistemology Otto Ritschl's Kantianism is of the realistic, dualistic type. The real subject of judgments relating to God is an (assumed) independently existing reality, and to *assume* such a reality is by no means to *vindicate* its real existence. We must conclude, therefore, that Ritschlianism is left by Otto Ritschl pretty nearly where he found it; in so far as it is a form of dualistic realism with respect to God, it does not logically escape the agnostic conclusion.

Max Reischle defines value-judgment simply as being obviously "a judgment in which to any object a predicate of value is assigned" (*Werturteile und Glaubensurteile*, Halle, 1900, p. 44). He admits that in the strict interpretation of the definition, whereby only those judgments are called value-judgments which are such *verbally*, there are but few religious judgments which are value-judgments (*Ibid.*, pp. 76, 85, 88). In a broader, psychological sense, however, judgments which arise out of and express a personal appreciation of value may be called value-judgments. These "feeling-judgments" (*Gemütsurteile*), as they may also be called, are quite numerous, and under this head most religious judgments would be classed (*Ibid.*, pp. 78, 86). But besides the verbal and the psychological value-judgments, there may be judgments which are value-judgments *epistemologically*. These are so named by Reischle because their validity depends not on any necessity of perception or of thought, but only upon appreciation, or in other words upon the attitude of the feeling-willing person to the represented objects. These epistemological value-judgments Reischle also calls "thymetic judgments,"—"whole-souled judgments" we might translate—among which he would include all genuine judgments of religious faith (*Ibid.*, pp. 81, 86, 93-98, 103-107).

Reischle cannot agree with those who hold that religious judgments are "theoretical," or that they are mere postulates. Rather do they express truths which, he maintains, are well known to the religious man in and through his trust in the normative divine revelation.

"We do not judge that God's holy love must be real, because it is so valuable to us as to be indispensable; on the contrary, God's love makes itself known to us as a reality: the appearance of Jesus Christ makes inevitably upon our spiritual consciousness the impression of divine exaltation and love, and only upon this basis does there take place within us the thymetic judgment that God is active in him. We simply interpret the given historic phenomenon as divine revelation" (*Ibid.*, pp. 102-103).

This language would be very appropriate in the mouth of one whose religious epistemology was a monistic realism. Is that Reischle's position? Has he broken away from the prevailing Kantian agnostic dualism of the Ritschlian school? As early as 1891 he published an article in the *Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche*, entitled "Erkennen wir die Tiefen Gottes?" in which he insisted that "that which is intelligible and experienceable to us in faith in Christ can be designated by no better name than the depths [or 'deep things,' *Tiefen*, cf. I Cor. 2:10] of God" (Republished in *Aufsätze und Vorträge*, 1906, p. 54).

"Simply to *postulate* a divine love on the mere basis of our needs is folly," in his opinion. "The question is whether what we need is imparted to us, . . . whether the love of God is *revealed* through good deeds." "Whoever becomes aware of the power which through Christ lifts us out of sin and sorrow and transitoriness into eternal life, becomes aware of God." "We find ourselves under the working of a power which is independent of our subjective thoughts and reaches into our own life, so that we can experience its workings within ourselves as something real" (*Ibid.*, pp. 39, 46, 56).

If Reischle were able to maintain himself at the epistemological level suggested by at least some of these statements, we should have to recognize him as a genuine monistic realist in his religious epistemology. The language seems to be that of genuinely perceptual intuition and experientially verified religious knowledge. But other expressions lead us to doubt the correctness of such a classification. Merely imaginal intuition, if highly assured subjectively, seems sometimes to be put upon the same level of certainty as what might very well be interpreted as perceptual knowledge. For instance, the "love of Almighty God" seems to be put upon the same basis so far as its being certainly known is concerned, as "the workings of a saving power experienced as real" (*Werturteile*, etc., pp. 102-103; *Erkennen Wir*, etc., pp. 36, 39). One notes the statement also that it is only from a purely practical point of view that we can decide whether the propositions are true or false (*Werturteile und Glaubensurteile*, pp. 112-117). We recall that the validity of "thymetic judgments," under which Reischle includes all vital religious judgments, is said to depend upon the attitude of the subject of the judgment toward the represented object. Furthermore, it is held to be a sufficient guarantee against a logical dualism of the theoretical and the practical, that both sets of judgments belong to the same person—as if no one had ever been baffled by such a contradiction in his own experience. Finally, in one of his latest articles, Reischle asserts that Kant's most valuable contribution to theology was his demarcation of the limits of knowledge, the consequence being that now "the opponent of Christianity dare not say, Here is science, and there faith. It is a case of faith against faith" (*Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche*, XIV, 1904, pp. 371-372). It thus becomes evident that, in spite of Reischle's insistence upon "revelation" in religious experience, that very important concept is not made sufficiently intelligible for the appeal of religious experience to prove effective in delivering the theologian of dualistic Kantian prepossessions from at least the forms of thought of religious agnosticism.

The Ritschlians have much to say of "revelation," but the concept is

left vague from the epistemological point of view, with the result that the theologian oscillates back and forth between agnosticism and dogmatism. On dualistic presuppositions verification of faith is impossible; if one has faith, the object of his faith is said to be revelation; but in the absence of faith there is no revelation, and in the absence of revelation there can be no faith. A good illustration of the impasse into which epistemological dualism leads religion is to be found in the theology of Theodor Haering.

Like the two Ritschls, Herrmann, and Reischle, Haering rejects the idea that the objects of faith are postulated upon the basis of experience of value; on the contrary they are, he holds, actually communicated through revelation. But "we know only a revelation which is real for trust, but trust is not self-dependent; it has its foundation and point of support in revelation" (*Der christliche Glaube*, 1906, pp. 40-42, 121). The "beautiful circle" involved in this course of thought is pointed out by Luedemann (*Op. cit.*, p. 219); but what we would suggest is that its association with epistemological dualism in religion is what makes it a vicious circle. If "trust" be the name for the right adjustment to the experienceable divinely functioning reality, it may well be that it is an indispensable condition of actual recognizable experience of that reality in one's own life. Revelation, religious perception, or experience of divine reality, may well have its subjective as well as its objective conditions. This no more involves an illogical begging of the question or circle in argument than is involved in ordinary scientific experimentation. But from a dualistic point of view, where verification is impossible and where the thinker is foredoomed to agnosticism, "revelation" cannot be more than subjective, and dependent for its being upon its being believed in.

Wilhelm Herrmann, of Marburg, was the first theologian to ally himself openly with Ritschl. I take him up for consideration at the end of this chapter because his position on religious epistemology and theological methodology, while somewhat obscure, seems to be transitional between a theology explicitly valuational and implicitly existential, and a theology explicitly existential and implicitly valuational. Herrmann began his theological authorship by protesting, in his doctoral dissertation, against the introduction of metaphysics, in the ordinary sense of the word, into theology. Like Ritschl, he does not object to ontology interpreted as criticism of the concepts used for the scientific interpretation of experience. Metaphysics in this sense has value for theology, since it furnishes the theologian with conceptual instruments for his task. But metaphysics as non-religious *Weltanschauung*, as speculation concerning the nature of God, as the attempt of reason to represent a world-whole

comprehending the multiplicity of things under a single all-determining principle or law, has no more place in legitimate metaphysics, or the science of the categories, than speculation concerning the bones of angels has place in scientific anatomy (*Die Metaphysik in der Theologie*, pp. 15, 21, 48; *Die Religion in Verhältniss zum Welterkennen und zur Sittlichkeit*, pp. 361-362). Religion may be indifferent to the speculations of men of science so long as they do not seek to make out of their theoretical constructions a world-view as a substitute for that of religion. It is metaphysics as a combination of the idea of the unity of the world with the religious idea of God that works mischief to theology and religion. The God of metaphysics and the God of religion are not the same (*Die Metaphysik*, etc., p. 4; *Die Religion*, etc., pp. 37, 39, 47, 66, 85, 86, 117, 125-130, 360-361).

Religion has its own way of arriving at its assurance of God and of framing a comprehensive view of the world. In this connection Herrmann makes use of expressions which may seem to suggest that his theory of religious knowledge is an immediate, monistic realism. The religious man, he tells us, "has so strong a sense of being possessed, as it were, that he must say, 'This is God.' At such a time God makes himself felt, and sets the man in that inward condition which is blessedness. In this frame of mind, the words, 'God is present,' are the simple expression of the simple experience." These are "the sacred moments when we experience God's immediate presence." Indeed, "without the conviction that we stand in actual communion with God there can be no religion at all," for "in religion man seeks not simply God's gifts, but God himself" (*The Communion of the Christian with God*, 1st Eng. tr., pp. 17, 22, 24).

This must not, however, be interpreted as indicating a sympathetic attitude on Herrmann's part toward mystical religion and the mystical theory of religious knowledge. He is quite as suspicious of the influence of mysticism as of the encroachments of metaphysics.

"When the influence of God upon the soul is sought and found solely in the inward experience of the individual; when certain excitements of the emotions are taken with no further question as evidence that the soul is possessed by God; when at the same time nothing external to the soul is consciously perceived and firmly grasped," this is "the piety of mysticism." But "the Christian must pronounce the mystic's experience of God to be a delusion." Man cannot attain to the Christian experience of salvation "by simply turning inward upon himself." We must "get rid of the notion that the essence of religion . . . is an excitement of the emotions which may well up out of the depths of

any human soul; and which is to be regarded as indicating immediate possession by God" (*Ibid.*, pp. 19, 30, 31).

"If I say that in my case God comes near me in a process which goes on within my soul, then this process is for me the form of God's appearance; and it is this which brings me all that I can grasp of God," so that "God would be in such a case only a hidden, inscrutable power" (*Ibid.*, pp. 25, 26).

What, then, is the meaning of such statements as the following, of which we find so many in the writings of Herrmann?

"Revelation, which saves man, must be given to him as his most compelling experience." "The experience out of which religion may arise is the realization on the part of any religious man that he has *encountered a spiritual Power* in contact with which he has felt utterly humbled, yet at the same time uplifted to a real independent inner life." "In certain moments we find ourselves in the presence of a Power which inwardly constrains us. . . . The first result is a conviction that this Power is at work in all the movements of that inner life which is its hidden realm. . . . The second result is that we respond to this living Power which thus *makes itself perceptible* to us." "Nothing in religion should be called revelation save what is capable of setting us face to face with the reality of God" (*Systematic Theology*, Eng. tr., Macmillan, 1927, pp. 35-39, italics mine).

Are we to interpret such sayings after the manner of what we have called a critical monistic realism in religious epistemology, as referring to what we have called religious perception? Standing by themselves, these passages strongly suggest such an interpretation.

But before attempting any final answer to the question, it may be well to note that the revelation of a spiritual Power at work in religious experience is historically mediated to us, according to Herrmann, who has expressed himself very emphatically in this connection. For awakening the certainty of the supernatural so that it will bind itself to our self-conscious life we have no other means but the revelation of God in Christ (*Die Religion*, etc., p. 399). "We know only one fact in the whole world which can give us . . . the full certainty that God exists for us, . . . namely, the appearance of Jesus in history" (*Communion with God*, 1st Eng. tr., p. 52). In the inner life of Jesus we see the victorious power of the Good over the real, and are made certain of a Power that was with him, sufficient to enable him to achieve moral and spiritual triumph in spite of the opposition of the world. This Power-greater-

than-all-things, that was with Jesus, is what the Christian means by God. Through the discovery of the divine Power revealed in and through the historic Jesus we are led to share his confidence that that power is sufficient to have seen to it that Jesus, who lost his life in this world, has nevertheless been able to "overcome the world," and is all-sufficient to accomplish our spiritual redemption (*Ibid.*, pp. 65, 78, 79, 81, 96). The claim of the Eternal is felt in the moral imperative (*Faith and Morals*, Putnam, 1904, p. 36), but the religious completion of the moral consciousness can be accomplished only through relation to Jesus Christ (*Communion with God*, pp. 82, 83). This is why, according to Herrmann, mysticism is not enough. According to mysticism Christ simply "leads the disciple up to the threshold of blessedness," after which "he has no longer to do with Christ, but with God" (*Ibid.*, pp. 25, 26). But "the Church cannot allow herself to be placed permanently in a position where she must be separated from Christ if she is to be in true communion with God" (*Ibid.*, pp. 30, 31). Communion with God is then, for Herrmann, God's self-revelation as the Power greater than the world that was with Jesus, enabling him to triumph spiritually over the world, and man's trust in that power that was with Jesus, as sufficient for all our spiritual need.

This conception of communion with God, as being no immediate experience of God for ourselves, but the divinely accomplished triumph over the world in a human life nineteen hundred years ago, responded to by us in an intuitive faith in the sufficiency of that same divine power for our need, present and future, together with an interpretation of the beneficial results in our experience as divine in the sense of coming to us through that same original divinely valuable manifestation in a human life, begins to give us a clue to the underlying theory of knowledge. If I am not mistaken, what we have here in the religious realm is a dualistic epistemological realism, the gulf between the unexperienced, independently existing divine reality and the realm of human experience being bridged, not by perceptual but by what we have called imaginal intuition, the ideational content of which is accepted by the will and affirmed in faith. This "faith is the only possible knowledge of God" (*Systematic Theology*, p. 71). Theoretically speaking, the view is agnosticism. No careful distinction is made between the divinely functioning reality which enabled Jesus and enables others to triumph spiritually *as far as they are observed to have triumphed*, and a divine power trusted for further triumph *beyond the bounds of present perceptual experience*. This distinction, which is of crucial importance for critical monism's separation of the known from the merely believed, is naturally of no great importance for the dualistic view, where even what is called "religious knowl-

edge" is merely faith, or belief, which is highly assured subjectively and supported by considerations of value.

This interpretation receives support from a consideration of the marked tendency toward a *logical* dualism in Herrmann's religious thought. From a monistic and realistic point of view in religion as well as in the realm of sense, some religious consciousness would be knowledge in the same objective sense that there is knowledge of the world and of human selves, and it would not be permissible to allow the various items to contradict each other. But from a dualistic point of view, scientific knowledge is of phenomena, and theoretical, while religious "knowledge" is belief about the transempirical, highly assured, largely because felt to have absolute worth. From this point of view, discrepancies are to be expected and even tolerated. Truth and even reality have different meanings in the two realms of discourse. According to an early statement of Herrmann, it matters not to the man of faith whether his philosophy be materialistic or idealistic (*Die Metaphysik*, pp. 16, 17). Later in life he was not satisfied with so bold a statement (See H. R. Mackintosh, *The Christian Apprehension of God*, 1929, p. 59), but there are plenty of other statements to the same general effect, such as that it makes no difference whether the religious man holds to the transcendence or immanence of the "World-Ground" (*Die Religion*, p. 129); that he can defy all possible results of science (*Ibid.*, pp. 85, 362); that while science must reject the idea of miracle, religion gives us courage to affirm it (*Offenbarung und Wunder*, pp. 31, 34, 40, 42). Even within theology itself, he held, there may be mutually contradictory propositions (*Ethik*, 4th ed., pp. 102, 127); and in his posthumously published lecture notes in Dogmatics, he declares the contradiction between divine omnipotence and the freedom of man's will to be insoluble, but claims that both doctrines are justified as owing their origin to different moments of the life of faith (*Systematic Theology*, pp. 92, 93). He even went so far as to declare that the better a philosophy is to explain the world, the worse it is from the point of view of religion (*Die Religion*, p. 127). This, he admits, is "what the ruling theology of our day calls 'dualism,' which it abhors greatly, because thereby its own beautiful alliance with science is called in question, an alliance from which only a worldly, grasping church could gain anything. Nevertheless, . . . science has no part or lot in the content of these thoughts. *For these things there is no theory of perception*" (*Communion with God*, 2nd Eng. tr., p. 354).

Indeed so far does Herrmann carry his logic-defying and science-ignoring dogmatism that he even undertakes to solve what is properly a problem of historical criticism on the basis of the religious consciousness. I refer to the question of the historicity of that in the New Testa-



ment picture of Jesus Christ which is rightly felt to be most essential, namely his inner life and character. Stripped of its obscuring superabundance of verbiage, what Herrmann has to say, if I interpret him aright, is that as Christians we know that the inner life of Jesus is an historic fact, because God is saving us thereby, although our only sufficient reason, in the last analysis, for believing that God is saving us is that the inner life of Jesus is an historic fact (*Communion with God*, Chapter II, especially Sections 2 and 5). Now this is of course a glaringly fallacious circular argument. What may be said is that any theory of the historic genesis of New Testament Christianity which denies the essential historicity of Jesus is highly improbable *historically*, and that assuming that essential historicity, we can (especially from a critically monistic and realistic point of view) evaluate that historic life religiously as divine in value (i.e. in quality and function), and even as revelation of an independently existing, divinely functioning reality; but from a philosophical point of view we are not in our faith exclusively dependent upon this fact alone, even granting that it is of all historic facts the most significant. There are other instances of the revelation of the divine within the field of our experience and knowledge. But for the dualistic, logically agnostic, philosophy-despising theologian, accustomed to put all his apologetic eggs in the one historical basket, to have the reassuring value of that one historic fact summarily destroyed would be calamity indeed.

## Chapter XVI

### EXISTENCE-JUDGMENTS BASED ON VALUE-JUDGMENTS

---

According to Hermann Siebeck, who was at one time a student under Herrmann, primitive man does not possess religion in the full sense of the word, but only the germ out of which it developed (*Lehrbuch der Religionsphilosophie*, 1893, pp. 2, 49-51). In its developed form, religion is essentially the consciousness of the necessity, the possibility, and the actuality of redemption. On the basis of his experience of the insufficiency of this mundane reality to meet his needs, especially the needs of his spiritual life, man becomes conscious of his need of a supramundane reality and supramundane values. At the same time he denies the absoluteness of mundane existence and mundane values (*Ibid.*, pp. 3, 11, 15, 210, 446). This consciousness of the necessity of the supramundane is, on its practical side, a consciousness of the need of redemption from the world (*Ibid.*, p. 16). But inasmuch as religion in its developed form is, "on its theoretical side, the world-view which denies the all-sufficiency of the mundane as such, and posits the existence of a highest value," there is included therein a consciousness of the possibility of redemption (*Ibid.*, pp. 330, 336, 442). But in moral redemption-religion especially there comes "revelation," the experience of the actuality of redemption (*Ibid.*, pp. 6, 15, 330, 332, 447). Thus in its consummate form religion is the conscious experience of revelation of the supramundane in redemption from the merely mundane life.

In this doctrine of revelation Siebeck seems to come almost within sight of such an empirical, realistic and non-dualistic theory of religious knowledge as might have found a place for a certain body of religious knowledge in the strict sense of the term. He even goes so far as to say that while God's existence cannot be proved from the mundane—unless indirectly, by showing its relativity (*Ibid.*, pp. 39, 40)—to the religious consciousness God proves his own existence immediately, in the redemptive revelation which he produces in the spiritual life of man (*Ibid.*, p. 206).

But Siebeck seems strangely blind to this apparent opening for at least a limited body of empirically verified religious knowledge. He makes

the rather indiscriminating assertion that the religious object cannot be perceived (*Ibid.*, p. 445). As with so many other German theologians and philosophers of religion, his inherited Kantianism is at fault. He assumes a dualistic realism, according to which one cannot answer either in the affirmative or in the negative the question as to whether the inner "redemptive" experience of the religious man, which appears to him to be the revelation of a supramundane Power, is really a contact with the supramundane. "Against faith, science can authoritatively deny the possibility of scientific proof of the objects of faith; against science, faith can with equal right dispute the possibility of their denial" (*Ibid.*, pp. 196, 212-213). Neither can metaphysics prove the truth of faith, nor really synthesize the affirmations of faith with the results of science (*Ibid.*, pp. 39, 203). Like Herrmann, Siebeck despairs of theological metaphysics and a metaphysical theology, but where Herrmann falls back on the subjectively assured intuitions of faith and calls their deliverances religious knowledge, Siebeck is more consistent with the Kantian dualism common to them both and remains frankly agnostic. If, moreover, he had chosen as his adjective for the religious object "divine" instead of "supramundane," he might possibly have been led away from his Kantian agnosticism. This would have been a better term anyway, for while the term "supramundane" rightly looks toward an existential theology, it suggests the transcendent as opposed to the immanent. The term "divine," being a term of value as well as ultimately of existence, serves to express the criterion of the divine as supremely worthwhile, and immanent, revealed, as well as to refer to the divine as also transcendently existent.

Whether Siebeck became a teacher of philosophy because as a Kantian dualist he could see no possibility of verifying religious judgments about supramundane reality, or whether, being a professor of philosophy, he felt he could speak frankly about the so-called "religious knowledge" of his Kantian and Ritschlian friends, he is at any rate clear-cut in his statements and much easier to interpret than his former teacher, Herrmann. Faith, as he sees it, is an act of free will; it is choosing to answer in the affirmative when confronted with the theoretically unanswerable question as to the reality of an absolute Good (*Ibid.*, pp. 333, 442). The only proof of the truth of religion is the practical, as opposed to the theoretical. Religion is shown by its critical philosophical examination to be not only causally but teleologically necessary; wherefore, unless man's fundamental being and impulse are chimerical, and life a gigantic illusion, we must conclude that this twofold necessity of religion "establishes its normality, that is, its truth" (*Ibid.*, pp. 36, 444, 446). This seemingly rather abrupt step from showing the normality of religion to asserting its truth really means pointing out that one may *reasonably*

choose a positive religious faith. If, however, the attempt be made, from the point of view of a dualistic religious epistemology, to transform this modest argument into a completely demonstrative proof, it will be found to involve once more the familiar fallacy of *circulus in probando*. Religion can hardly be admitted to be *completely* normal unless it is essentially true. To presume, apart from any verification of its hypotheses, that it is normal enough to be demonstrably true, is of course to beg the question to be proved. When this fallacy is adequately guarded against, Siebeck's "practical proof" of the truth of religion subsides into the theoretical agnosticism with respect to God which is logically consequent upon a dualistic religious epistemology, supplemented, however, by a permissive fiat for the will to believe.

In so far as Siebeck indicates what his theology would be, it may be said that it is or would be primarily and explicitly existential, but implicitly valuational. The same thing may be said of the other theologians whose views will be considered in this chapter, a number of whom state explicitly that religious judgments are not value-judgments, but theoretical or existential judgments based upon value-judgments. One of these is R. A. Lipsius, a contemporary of the elder Ritschl, but one whose views remained for the most part unpublished until toward the close of his life.

According to Lipsius the judgments of faith are existential judgments, some of which spring directly from experienced needs, while others are based upon value-judgments, or valuations, either of the experiences in which wants are satisfied, or of the objects which secure this satisfaction. Theoretical judgments which spring from want assert the real existence of what is wished for; those which spring from satisfaction assert reflectively the real existence of certain qualities in that object (*Philosophie und Religion*, pp. 168, 170, 173, 175-176, 184, 193-195. Cf. Luedemann, *op. cit.*, p. 154). But it must not be assumed, Lipsius urges, that theoretical judgments which rest upon needs and value-judgments are to be exempted from the same process of criticism as applies to all other theoretical judgments (*Ibid.*, pp. 168, 176, etc.). Theological statements must be harmonized into a system (*Glaube und Wissen*, p. 26). Theology must not contradict science, but all metaphysical speculations about the transcendent must be banished from theology; in this Lipsius is in accord with Ritschl (*Die ritschl'sche Theologie*, 1888, p. 27). Theology must set forth the content of what religion takes to be revelation.

The way in which this concept of revelation is treated is decisive for the epistemological criticism of Lipsius, as it is also for most of the Ritschlians. Belief in revelation is regarded by Lipsius as fundamental to religion (*Dogmatik*, 1893, p. 87); the only direct proof of the truth

of the Christian religion is to be found in the appropriation of the historic Christian revelation so that it becomes one's own personal certainty (*Philosophie und Religion*, p. 274). Once this certainty is achieved it is not inferior to the certainty of science (*Glaube und Wissen*, p. 24). This emphasis upon revelation and its personal appropriation bears witness to the avowed purpose of Lipsius "to reach an understanding with realism" in his theory of religious knowledge (*Philosophie und Religion*, p. 5). But his epistemology remains fundamentally Kantian (*Ibid.*), and while holding that that alone is true religion which rests upon divine revelation, he admits the futility of appealing to revelation as an apologetic for religion, since it can never be proved by argument that any particular event is revelation; only those would be convinced who already believe, and they need no argument (*Ibid.*, p. 175; *Dogmatik*, pp. 88-89). As Luedemann remarks (*Op. cit.*, p. 156), *rightly enough from a dualistic point of view*, Lipsius recognizes that the fallacy of reasoning in a circle is involved in the appeal to historic revelation. From the critical standpoint this certitude of faith that certain objects or events are divine revelation is "pious surmise." "Its organ is not the understanding, but believing imagination under the influence of the impulses of feeling." We *know* certain *effects* produced in us and in the surrounding world, but that these are the effects of a divine cause, can be certain in any particular instance only to *faith* (*Glaube und Wissen*, p. 26).

Now if Lipsius had been a monistic realist in his theory of knowledge he might have said that through perception of effects and appreciation of their divine value religious perception of divine processes and a divinely functioning reality was a possibility (*Cf.* Chapter XI *supra*). But being an epistemological dualist he could only say that in religion as in experience generally the immediate object of our knowledge is our own representations, and that we never can transcend them, even the objects which we distinguish from our representations being present for us only as represented objects (*Philosophie und Religion*, pp. 6, 10). Religious knowledge is therefore, according to Lipsius, essentially self-knowledge, a knowing of ourselves as the subjects of religious experience (*Dogmatik*, p. 57). He thus adheres to the view of Schleiermacher according to which what we call theology becomes, if made scientific, anthropocentric rather than, as all theology should be, theocentric. It becomes a branch of anthropology, of religious history, or of the psychology of religion. Thus we see that Lipsius, in spite of—perhaps because of—his elaborately secured "understanding with realism," remains fundamentally agnostic in religion. This is the appropriate nemesis of a dualistic theory of religious knowledge.

A further point of criticism against Lipsius is that his theology, especially in so far as it is simply postulated on the basis of need, real or

supposed, and is, as from his dualistic point of view it must be, without any definite empirical verification, lies open to the charge of being essentially of the nature of wishful thinking. Very different is the situation where positive experience of the satisfaction of spiritual need in religious experience can be reasonably interpreted, from a monistic and realistic point of view, as at least partial verification of the hypotheses of faith and theology.

According to Julius Kaftan, Immanuel Kant is the philosopher of Protestantism, as Aristotle is the philosopher of Catholicism (*Kant, der Philosoph des Protestantismus*). Empirical knowledge is of phenomena only; on metaphysical questions we must remain theoretically agnostic. Religion is not at all concerned with an "objective" conception of the world, but with our personal attitude toward the world (*Das Wesen der christlichen Religion*, Leipzig, 1881, 1888, p. 46). In it values and not facts decide; not representation, but feeling (*Ibid.*, p. 50). Religious feeling gives rise to theoretical judgments, but these are different from the theoretical judgments which enter into a scientific knowledge of the world (*Ibid.*, p. 47). They cannot be *required* of any one, as can scientific judgments; they are an affair of inner freedom (*Ibid.*, pp. 50-51). In short, religious judgments are theoretical judgments which rest on value-judgments (*Ibid.*, pp. 46, 49, 50). Thus for Kaftan theology is explicitly existential, and only implicitly valuational.

More particularly, while ethics is interested in the Good, religion is interested in goods (*Ibid.*, pp. 52, 132). That is good which we ought to will, whether we do or not (*Ibid.*, p. 63). It satisfies, or furthers satisfaction, or promises it for the future (*Ibid.*, p. 59). But the value-judgments which lie at the basis of the theoretical judgments of religion are those concerned with *goods*, rather than with the Good; they are natural, or eudemonistic, rather than moral value-judgments (*Ibid.*, pp. 52-53). Need and dissatisfaction, together with uncertainty with reference to his life and the goods which he appreciates, drive man to religion (*Ibid.*, pp. 64-70). On its theoretical side, religion is faith in God, or "knowledge" of God. It posits a spiritual power or spiritual powers, different from the world and exalted above it, beings of extraordinary power and capable of responding to man's need, and therefore possessed of intelligence and will (*Ibid.*, pp. 115-119). All religions thus claim knowledge of a transcendent Reality, and while this "knowledge" is always subjectively conditioned, it nevertheless always means to be objectively valid (*Ibid.*, pp. 135, 202).

Kaftan is thus emphatic in insisting that the object of religious knowledge is not religion, but God. All the propositions of faith can be expressed as judgments concerning God, his essence and his will (*Ibid.*, pp.

114, 136). Schleiermacher and Lipsius are wrong, therefore, when they treat religious knowledge as reflection on the subjective fact of religion (*Ibid.*, pp. 104-109, 137, 139; cf. *The Truth of the Christian Religion*, Eng. tr. by R. Flint, T. & T. Clark, 1894, Vol. II, pp. 414, 420, 421). But, on the other hand, Kaftan is just as positive, and rightly so from his dualistic point of view, that theology can never be a science of the objects of faith, but only a science of the faith itself. That is, it can only be scientific as a presentation of what is believed; it can only exhibit any particular faith with the care and exactness distinctive of scientific work (*The Truth*, etc., II, pp. 409-410, 421; cf. *Dogmatik*, 3rd edn., pp. 102, 107). In all this, Kaftan's ground is simply that of positive science. The dogmatics of any particular religion, as a branch of the science of religion, contains an accurate description of what that particular faith asserts concerning the transcendent Reality which is the object of faith. The science is a positive, empirical, *anthropocentric* science. As faith, "religious knowledge" is *theocentric*, about God; but for the Kantian dualist theology, as science, cannot be about God; it can only be about phenomenal man—in particular, about his faith. As himself participating in the faith of a religious communion, Kaftan claims to possess religious knowledge, not knowledge in the theoretical sense, but valid assurance resting on a non-theoretical basis, albeit expressing itself in theoretical judgments.

Now this "religious knowledge," defined, as we have seen, as knowledge of God, necessarily presupposes, according to Kaftan, something which can be taken as authentic *revelation* of God (*Das Wesen*, etc., p. 139). A religion is true if and in so far as it rests on revelation (*Ibid.*, p. 197), and in the Christian religion we have a religion which is grounded on the self-revelation of God in the historical life of Jesus Christ (*Ibid.*, pp. 81, 202, etc.). In his *Dogmatik*, therefore, Kaftan undertakes to unfold with scientific accuracy the content of the Christian revelation-faith for the ecclesiastical communion whose religious life he shares. As a systematic, normative as well as descriptive discipline, the dogmatics seeks to include all propositions concerning God which can be deduced from the presupposition that God is revealed in Jesus Christ (*The Truth*, etc., II, pp. 409, 411; *Dogmatik*, p. 107).

But dogmatics, according to Kaftan, must be *preceded* by apologetics, which has the task of showing, in the first place, that the answer to the highest and ultimate questions which we can ask can be given only in the form of a faith; and in the second place, that only the Christian faith gives an answer which harmonizes with the other truth we possess (*Dogmatik*, pp. 99, 107; *The Truth*, etc., I, pp. 11, 19). Kaftan undertakes, therefore, to prove the truth of the Christian religion by considerations which exist for every one, that is, scientifically, objectively, without regard

to will or judgments of value (*The Truth*, etc., I, pp. 10, 12). But instead of risking injury to the content and certainty of the Christian faith by combining apologetics with dogmatics and trying to transform religious faith into secular knowledge—by giving a scientific demonstration of the existence of God, for example—he simply seeks to prove the truth of the Christian religion by showing the reasonableness of faith in the Christian revelation (*Ibid.*, I, pp. 19, 114, 117, 119, 355; II, p. 384). He claims that the history of the human race becomes intelligible as a whole, only if there is such a revelation in it as that which Christianity asserts, and that it is reasonable therefore to believe in that revelation. Moreover, it is reasonable to take the only possible way of arriving at an answer to the question of the origin and final purpose of all things, which is what people do when they seek to understand and interpret the world by starting with the highest result that has been disclosed to them in their history, by which their history gains unity and meaning; and so it is reasonable to recognize in the Christian revelation and its content the rational principle for the interpretation of the world (*Ibid.*, II, p. 385). As for the proof of special doctrines, that is to be accomplished by showing that they are necessarily involved in faith in the Christian revelation (*Ibid.*, I, p. 20; II, p. 410).

The point of interest in Kaftan's apologetics for our present purpose is that it is his way of attempting to escape from the religious agnosticism involved in the dualistic religious epistemology which he accepts. His first appeal, as we have seen, is to revelation; but by revelation he does not mean the discoverable presence of the divine in valid religious experience. Revelation for Kaftan is not naturally discoverable by man as a religious being; rather is it something which he can only *accept* in faith, as supernaturally given. Consequently the dogmatics built upon what faith takes to be revelation is, from the theoretical point of view, purely subjective. An apologetic for faith ostensibly employing only purely objective considerations is therefore the next requirement. But concerning this apologetic it is confessed in the end that its chief function is not to meet objections from without, but to satisfy the Christian believer who is aware of the intellectual problems of his age (*Dogmatik*, p. 101). This seems to indicate that the apologetic is after all not quite so objective and free from all regard to judgments of value as it set out to be. Indeed the upshot of the whole project of giving an objective theoretical proof of the Christian religion is that certain considerations—convincing only to those who are already convinced or desirous of being convinced—are brought forward to show that it is reasonable to be guided by practical-ethical instead of theoretical considerations, even in testing the validity of claims to knowledge (*The Truth*, etc., II, pp. 385, 431; *Das Christentum und die Philosophie*, 1896, pp. 12, 23).



Kaftan is here groping after a principle to which modern pragmatism has attempted to do justice (See Chapter XVIII *infra*); but his position, as he states it, is not completely unified; from either side it is self-refuting. On the one hand, as we have seen, he claims to give a proof of the truth of the Christian religion without dependence on judgments of value, but this turns out to be an argument for making value-judgments all-determining in the matter of an ultimate world-view. On the other hand, although he advocates the subordination of the theoretical to the practical-ethical, he argues, ostensibly on purely theoretical grounds, that it is reasonable to do so, thus claiming to provide an apologetic for the Christian faith in which the practical-ethical is virtually subordinated to the theoretical.

A further symptom of weakness, from the theoretical point of view, is the refusal even to try to combine in a unitary world-view the essentials of religious "knowledge" with the general results of scientific investigation. Kaftan admits that to assure the believer that he has knowledge of God, faith must be brought into relation with all other knowledge ("Die Einheit des Erkennens," *Drei akademische Reden*, 1908, p. 49; *The Truth*, etc., II, p. 430). But he protests that a direct combination of the results of science with the content of faith is impossible (*The Truth*, etc., II, p. 420). Indeed, even philosophy must remain forever separated from faith; for, while philosophy always retains something of the free character of science and is always ready to revise its judgments, faith is inwardly bound and has its certainty only through obedience to divine revelation (*Das Christentum*, etc., pp. 25-26). Faith-knowledge and scientific or philosophical knowledge are different kinds of knowing, and so cannot be united in one system. To be sure, all knowing is mental awareness of reality, but the conditions under which knowledge comes into existence in the two cases are very different, and consequently the knowledge in the two cases is likewise different. It is hard to follow Kaftan here. Once we have scientific knowledge that reality has a certain character, and religious knowledge that reality has certain additional characters, why should we not, if we assume that science and religion are both valid, attempt to see of what nature reality must be to have both the character ascribed to it by science and that asserted of it by faith?

Fundamentally, the difficulty with Kaftan's theory is that he attempts the impossible. According to his presuppositions, God, the religious object, is wholly transcendent, supramundane, while man's knowledge is confined to that which is immanent in human experience. Now what Kaftan undertakes to do is to leap from the experienced phenomenal sphere to the unexperienced transcendent Reality, not only without dependence upon rationalistic speculation, but also—and this is the fatal omission—without dependence upon anything approaching direct experience or

## THE PROBLEM OF RELIGIOUS KNOWLEDGE

perception of the religious object. The "revelation" to which appeal is made is not immediate presence of the divine, but a partial return to the traditional idea of an externally authoritative communication to the religious individual of things to be believed. In order to respect the freedom of the individual, however, there is introduced the idea of his personal appreciation of values, as fundamental to his theological affirmations. The Christian's certitude that in the historic Jesus Christ there is revelation of the living God is a subjective conviction rooted in the inner life of the individual (*Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche*, I, p. 481). The outcome of all this is a modified and subdued and yet but thinly disguised external dogmatism. Our objection would not be to the appeal to revelation, if only revelation were rightly understood as normal and experiential; but Kaftan's presuppositions are such that a real, empirical revelation is logically impossible; what he calls revelation is the theological information involved in the presupposition that God is like Christ—a presupposition supported by the appeal to an external authority so denatured, out of respect for the prejudices of the modern man, as to seem to be the individual's own free and independent judgment.

Max Scheibe accepts in a general way the distinction made by Schleiermacher and the Ritschlians between religious and philosophical knowledge (*Die Bedeutung der Werturteile für das religiöse Erkennen*, 1893, pp. 1-31, etc.), and his general philosophy of religious knowledge approximates that of Kaftan at many points. But he is more of a follower of his former teacher, Lipsius (*Ibid.*, p. 88), than he is of the Ritschlians or even of such a half-way Ritschlian as Kaftan. Like both Lipsius and Kaftan he holds to the explicitly existential and only implicitly valuational character of theology; it consists, in his opinion, not in value-judgments but in existential judgments resting upon a valuational basis. But with Scheibe, as with the two or three theologians next to be considered, one marked and important methodological difference from the procedure of the Ritschlians and other "half-way Ritschlians" is introduced. With regard to the relation of theology to metaphysics, Scheibe, under the influence of Lotze (*Ibid.*), departs from the position of both Lipsius and the Ritschlians.

Religion is defined by Scheibe as "the consciousness of humble dependence upon God and of loving communion with him" (*Ibid.*, p. 36). Norms for the distinctive values of religion are found in the ideal of redemption from the limits of finitude, and, actually and increasingly in prospect, in the satisfaction of man's deepest and innermost aspiration and longing (*Ibid.*, p. 35). Religious values form a special class, therefore, in distinction from the hedonistic, the aesthetic, and the moral, although these others are presupposed by religion (*Ibid.*; cf. pp. 27-33). It is also

involved in the proposed definition of religion that religious knowledge, as the knowledge which the religious man either possesses or seeks, is fundamentally the knowledge that the deity of whom he has need really exists independently of the facts of the religious consciousness. Religious dependence and communion plainly presuppose belief in the real existence of the religious object (*Ibid.*, pp. 36-38).

This knowledge claimed for religion is to be distinguished from scientific knowledge, however. The difference between the two is not so much in the object, for in both cases it is knowledge of independent reality which is claimed; it is rather in the mode of the origin of the knowledge that the difference lies. Scientific knowledge arises out of the elaboration of perception by thought, without regard to our personal attitude toward the objects of knowledge; but religious knowledge of the existence of God arises, as Lipsius contended, "out of practical necessities." The existence of the very God of whom man has need is postulated, demanded by the religious consciousness. God must be merciful, since man needs forgiveness; the world must be under the rule and guidance of God, for only under that presupposition can man trust that there are no insurmountable obstacles in the way of his realization of the moral demands of which he is conscious; and so it is with the other articles of faith (*Ibid.*, pp. 45-49).

Religious knowledge, then—or what Scheibe calls by that name—does not consist of value-judgments, such as that the love of God is valuable; but it may be said to rest upon value-judgments in the sense that man in his religious "knowledge" is "certain" that that which is religiously worthful to him is real and true. In short, for Scheibe, as for the others considered in this chapter, the judgments of religious knowledge are existential or theoretical judgments, postulated on the ground of value-judgments (*Ibid.*, pp. 38-40, 51-53). The religious needs and satisfactions are experiences, and so in a sense it may be said that religious knowledge rests upon experience, but this is simply experience of one's own states; God, the object of religious knowledge, is wholly transcendent in relation to human consciousness (*Ibid.*, pp. 38, 41-43, 58, 61-62).

But while Scheibe thus differentiates between scientific and religious knowledge, he would insist nevertheless that since both science and religion make affirmations concerning transcendent reality, a reconciliation between the two must be undertaken (*Ibid.*, pp. 58, 64, etc.). We are not to expect religious knowledge to be transformed into disinterested science; but on the one hand, inasmuch as theology uses categories which metaphysics undertakes to define, there is a place for metaphysics in the theological task; and on the other hand, metaphysics has need of religious knowledge in order to fill up the gaps in our knowledge left by the positive sciences (*Ibid.*, pp. 83-86).

By means of this cordial attitude toward religious metaphysics, Scheibe provides, more effectually than most epistemological dualists in religion, for avoiding the *appearance* of agnosticism. But it must be admitted that, in spite of his nearer approach to a satisfactory epistemology, his theory fails in the end to provide for the possibility of a genuine knowledge of God, or of divine reality. The religious object is regarded as forever transcendent. There is a reference to the experimental basis of theology, but the experiences meant are of one's own religious states, not immediate experiences of any divine reality. The epistemological dualism of merely subjective experience and independent reality never experienced by us logically excludes the possibility of verifying any proposition about the independently real. We miss the Ritschlian appeal—vague and unsatisfactory as it undoubtedly is—to revelation. The religious man, as Scheibe sees him, knows that he has religious needs and that they are satisfied by religion, and this effect he ascribes to the agency of the God whose existence he *postulates* because of the insistence of his *needs*; as a religious man he *feels certain* that that which is religiously worthful to him is real and true (*Ibid.*, pp. 51-52); but when the question arises as to how the reference to purely subjective feelings can justify assertions concerning a transcendent reality which never becomes the object of man's immediate experience, we are left without an answer. It may be unfair to dismiss consciousness of real need and the framing of an idea of what would, if real, meet that need, as if it had no more significance than any other instance of unverified wishful thinking; but it is a most serious criticism that the religious ideas postulated by Scheibe on the basis of need and value are not only, as is often the case in scientific pursuits, partly unverified as yet, but that they are, on Scheibe's epistemological presuppositions, wholly unverified and forever unverifiable. The feeling of certainty on which he depends is, unfortunately, only a subjective feeling accompanying a merely imaginal intuition. Generally speaking, imaginal intuitions are valuable, not as substitutes for objective, perceptual knowledge, but as guides to investigation and to either the progressive verification or the refutation, partial or complete, of the intuition, postulate, or hypothesis in question. But from Scheibe's point of view, dogmatism or agnosticism would seem to be a statement of the only alternatives. This, however, is not to deny that, with a critical monistic realism as our epistemology, we might gain from Scheibe's suggestive discussion some clues as to how our limited religious knowledge might be supplemented by a reasonably tenable faith.

Georg Wobbermin's position is best understood as a resultant—initially, at least—of the influence of Kaftan in theology and of Dilthey in philosophy, both of them pronounced epistemological dualists with reference

to ultimate reality. To Kaftan, Wobbermin is related much as Scheibe is related to Lipsius, Wobbermin's chief difference from Kaftan, like Scheibe's chief difference from Lipsius, lying in the more favorable attitude taken toward metaphysics in theology. Wobbermin agrees with Ritschl and all Ritschlians in excluding from theology the "mixed articles" in which the faith-knowledge of God was combined with and thus modified by the supposed but now discredited "natural" knowledge of God, that intellectualistic-speculative metaphysics which claimed to unveil all mysteries by means of pure thought. Wobbermin frequently refers to Kaftan, however, as marking an advance in clearness beyond the other Ritschlian theologians, especially in that he holds that all theological propositions deal with God, the transcendent object of religious faith. While he admits that Kaftan would not accept the term "metaphysics" in connection with his theological procedure, he claims nevertheless that, as embodying the result of reflection upon the transcendent, theology is essentially metaphysical (*Theologie und Metaphysik*, 1901, pp. 9, 10, 11, 12, 28, 29, 32-39, 61). Wobbermin also acknowledges the special influence of Dilthey, who excludes from philosophy the pseudo-metaphysic of dogmatic speculation, but who makes a place in philosophy for reflection upon the metaphysical elements of consciousness and upon the ultimate problems resulting therefrom. But while Dilthey does not call this reflection metaphysics, Wobbermin regards it as the only type of metaphysics justified today (*Ibid.*, p. 26). Thus the Christian view of transcendent Reality, formulated at first much as by Kaftan in his *Dogmatik*, but later in Wobbermin's own way in the third volume of his *Systematische Theologie (Wesen und Wahrheit des Christentums)*, 1926), is offered as a definite answer to the metaphysical problems concerning which Dilthey, in his *Weltanschauungslehre*, takes the ground that no demonstrably true answer can be given.

As against the older Ritschlians, then, Wobbermin's thesis is that without metaphysics, theology is impossible (*Theologie und Metaphysik*, p. 27; *Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche*, 1907, p. 147). His initial definition of metaphysics is quite broad; metaphysics is that discipline which puts the question as to the transcendent, i.e. that which lies beyond experience; or, in other words, it is reflection concerning the transcendent on the ground of scientific and other knowledge (*Theologie und Metaphysik*, pp. 27, 29, 42). The attempt to dispense with metaphysics in this sense of the term leads to such a position as the empirio-criticism of Avenarius, in the atmosphere of which theology could not possibly live (*Theol. u. Meta.*, pp. 26, 59, etc.; *Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche*, 1907, p. 148). But inasmuch as theology has the task of setting forth the religious world-view—for the Christian it is the Christian world-view—in the presence of the knowledge won through science, thus

making sure of remaining in harmony with the contemporary stage of spiritual development as a whole (*Theol. u. Meta.*, cf. p. 117), all propositions of Christian faith are in the last analysis metaphysical propositions (*Ibid.*, p. 29). The religio-ethical is not to be contrasted with the metaphysical, but with the intellectual (*Ibid.*, p. 31). Theology has the right to give to dogmatic expressions of religious faith the character of formal metaphysical propositions, following the logic immanent within the Christian faith (*Ibid.*, p. 118). Even Ritschl did not mean to banish metaphysics in this sense from theology (*Ibid.*, p. 41). He wrongly sought, however, to exclude even this broad type of metaphysics from Christology (*Ibid.*, pp. 30-32).

But it is not enough to see that theology, as the expression of faith in a transcendent God, is already implicitly metaphysical. It must be shown, furthermore, that the propositions of dogmatic religious (or formal) metaphysics are not opposed by any valid results of general philosophical (or material) metaphysics (*Ibid.*, p. 118). Here we are dealing with the concept of metaphysics in the narrower sense, as the philosophical or theoretical-intellectual elaboration of a world-view ("Psychologie und Erkenntniskritik der religiösen Erfahrung," in *Weltanschauung*, ed. by Max Frischeisen-Köhler, 1911, p. 345). Left to itself this philosophical metaphysics would be concerned to examine the axioms and fundamental concepts of the sciences, and to consider the questions arising out of the results of the special sciences (*Theol. u. Meta.*, p. 2). In so far as this philosophical metaphysics is concerned simply with the transcendent reality which corresponds to the presentations of things given in sense-experience, it constitutes *the lower level of metaphysics*. But in so far as what is taken up for consideration is the problem of a Reality beyond consciousness to which the life of will and feeling impels, we have here *the upper level of metaphysics*.

There is a definite limit, however, to what is to be undertaken here. As the propositions of dogmatic religious metaphysics (formal metaphysics) were not discovered by means of general philosophical, or material metaphysics, so the attempt is not to be made to prove them in this way (*Ibid.*, pp. 47, 118). But since the Christian religion offers an answer to the metaphysical problems and claims universal validity for its answers (*Ibid.*, p. 3), it will not do to assume, with Herrmann, that the only legitimate point of contact between theology and philosophy is in the distinguishing of their fields from each other (*Ibid.*, p. 11). Theology has the apologetic task of coming to an understanding with contemporary philosophy, and by means of this with science in general (*Ibid.*, pp. 4, 10), and this apologetic task is metaphysical. It must be shown that the facts of science are as favorable—indeed it can be shown that they are more favorable—to Christian theism than they are to atheism or

pantheism (*Der christliche Gottesglaube*, 1911, *passim*. Eng. tr. by D. S. Robinson, Yale Univ. Press, 1918), or to any of the characteristic forms of modern "monism" (*Monismus und Monotheismus*, 1911, *passim*). The classical arguments for the existence of God necessarily fail to accomplish the demonstration of God's existence; but an adequate defense of the truth of theistic religion will include refutation of the usual objections to the Christian idea of God, criticism of the claims that religion is illusory, and consideration of the question whether other realms and functions of mind do not point in the same general direction (*Systematische Theologie*, 1925, Vol. II, Book II, Eng. tr. by Menzel and Robinson, Crowell, 1933; cf. *Der christliche Gottesglaube*).

Wobbermin's main reliance for the defense of his religious metaphysics and metaphysical theology is placed upon an appeal to the psychology of both the metaphysical and the religious consciousness (*Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche*, 1907, p. 149). What he takes to be the true relation between the two easily becomes evident in the light of the definitions; comparison of Wobbermin's definition of religion with his definition of metaphysics already cited is all that is needed. Religion is defined as a tendency toward the transcendent (*Weltanschauung*, p. 357; *Zum Streit um Religionspsychologie*, pp. 49, 51. For a descriptive definition of religion, see *Systematische Theologie*, Vol. II, p. 254; Eng. tr., pp. 181-182); and metaphysics, as we have seen, is defined in terms of reflection upon the transcendent. Thus, while there may be religion without metaphysics (*Weltanschauung*, p. 344; *Zum Streit*, etc., p. 30), religion tends to express itself in thought, and religious thought, being made up of religious affirmations concerning the transcendent, is impossible without entering the field of metaphysics. World-view becomes necessary to religion, even if it remains secondary throughout (*Weltanschauung*, p. 351).

This easy transition from psychology to theology, from religion to metaphysics, has not gone without being challenged. F. Traub, for instance, a rather typical Ritschlian, objects that if religious contents are considered as phenomena, one has only the psychology of religion, not metaphysics; whereas, if the religious contents are affirmed as valid, that can only be by taking the religious point of view, and this is religion, not metaphysics. Traub admits that if he accepted Wobbermin's definition of metaphysics, he would have to agree that theology without metaphysics is impossible; but metaphysics, he claims, is rightly defined as *scientific* reflection concerning the transcendent, the term "scientific" being used in a rather broad sense (*Zeitschr. f. Th. u. K.*, 1906, p. 454; *Theologie und Philosophie*, pp. 129, 131). In so far as there can be disinterested, non-religious reflection concerning the transcendent, religion, according to Traub, for the sake of maintaining its own independence and freedom, should have nothing to do with it (*Theologie und Philosophie*, p.

140). But, as a Kantian dualist, Traub holds that our theoretical cognition is not competent in relation to the transcendent; neither the content nor the form of transcendent reality is accessible to it; it can neither affirm nor deny anything beyond experience. So then, metaphysics as *scientific* reflection concerning the transcendent is seen to be an impossibility, a non-entity; dropping out of consideration, it leaves the way open for "religious knowledge." What science can neither assert nor deny, that religion asserts, namely, the real existence of God (*Ibid.*, pp. 221, 235).

This Kantian-Ritschlian position of Traub is clear and intelligible; but it means theoretical agnosticism with regard to religious reality, even for the man who is practically religious. Wobbermin agrees with Traub that the empirical psychology of religion cannot solve the religious problem, for the reason that it ignores the problem of the *truth* of the content of religious experience. But an interest in the truth of its idea of God, he points out, is of the very essence of religion (*Weltanschauung*, pp. 349-351; *Zum Streit um Religionspsychologie*, 1913, pp. 51 f., etc.; *Systematische Theologie nach religionspsychologischer Methode*, I, 1913, pp. 148, 168, 282 ff., 294 f., 317 ff., 355 ff., 289 ff., 399 ff.). He seeks to find a middle course between the unrelieved theoretical agnosticism and religious dogmatism of the older Ritschlians, represented by Traub, and the rather rationalistic procedure of Troeltsch (v. *infra*), which imperils unduly, as he thinks, the Christian character of theology and religion (*Weltanschauung*, pp. 353-354; *Zum Streit*, etc., p. 44; *Yale Divinity Quarterly*, Vol. IV, 1907-1908, pp. 97-98; *Systematische Theologie*, I, Ch. XIX).

Wobbermin calls his own procedure the transcendental-psychological. It has to evaluate religious faith on the ground of its motives, estimate the truth-value of the different forms of expression of religious experience, and elaborate the religious conviction judged to be true (*Weltanschauung*, p. 355; *Zum Streit*, etc., pp. 26, 45, 74, etc.; *Systematische Theologie*, I, Ch. XXI). Wobbermin calls his method the Jamesian-Schleiermacher method. Beginning with some such psychological survey of the varieties of religious experience as that presented by William James in his famous Gifford Lectures (translated into German by Wobbermin himself), and recognizing in religion universally a tendency toward the transcendent and an interest in the truth of its ideas of the special transcendent object of religious faith, he sees that if there is to be any assurance on this point one must enter into the religious experience and share the faith of the religious communion which best commends itself to his critical evaluation. In other words, from mere scientific study of the varieties of religious experience he advocates going "back to Schleiermacher and forward from Schleiermacher," sharing a community reli-



gious consciousness and expressing it in religious and implicitly metaphysical judgments (*Systematische Theologie*, Vol. I, Part I).

Wobbermin does not claim that in this way he overcomes the theoretical agnosticism and religious dogmatism inherent in his dualistic epistemological presuppositions. His metaphysical-theological reflection, being centered on what, from his point of view, is inveterately transcendent, can never on any point attain to empirical verification in the scientific sense of the term. Independent realities, not being given immediately in human experience, remain strictly speaking unknowable. Even their existence is for us but hypothetical; it never gets beyond some degree of probability (*Theologie und Metaphysik*, pp. 27, 42, 44, 45, 47, 92, 94, 116; "Das Wesen des Christentums," in *Beiträge zur weiter Entwicklung der christlichen Religion*, 1905, p. 379). Religious faith is convinced of the reality of its object, but the attempt to prove the objective reality of the object of faith cannot get beyond the "consciousness" of its objective existence (*Theol. u. Meta.*, pp. 99-100). Indeed Wobbermin frankly confesses and even insists that the procedure he recommends necessarily involves a logical "circle," a begging of the question to the extent of assuming that there is religious truth, that religion is not ultimately illusory (*Weltanschauung*, pp. 355-356; *Zum Streit*, etc., p. 47; *Systematische Theologie*, I, pp. 405 ff., 437 ff.; *Richtlinien evangelischer Theologie*, 1929, p. 53). But while religion thus goes *beyond* mere logic, it does not necessarily go *against* logic, and in the light of the values at stake, the circle involved in the leap of faith is regarded as justified.

Systematic theology can thus, in Wobbermin's opinion, only remain upon the way pointed out by Schleiermacher; it can only set forth the affirmations of subjective religious assurance (*Theol. u. Meta.*, p. 107), an assurance which is greatest where, as in the case of universal human values, the demands of feeling and will are most highly appreciated (*Ibid.*, p. 95). The metaphysician should take ethical, aesthetic and religious values into consideration in estimating the comparative merits of world-views (*Zeitschr. für Theol. und Kirche*, 1907, p. 148). A world-view is not satisfactory unless it satisfies not only the legitimate demands of science but also the deeper needs of the human spirit, and especially those of the practical-ethical nature (*Weltanschauung*, p. 363). We see here an attempt to relieve the theoretical agnosticism and religious dogmatism of a position by the suggestion of what may be called an ethico-religious pragmatism. But when Wundt (*Probleme der Völkerpsychologie*, 1911) charges Wobbermin as well as Troeltsch with seeking to introduce pragmatism into theological method, Wobbermin declares that he has never adopted but would absolutely reject the pragmatism of William James (*Zum Streit*, etc., p. 68). That is doubtless true of pragmatism narrowly defined; but apart from all questions of the meanings of terms, and without any

thought of minimizing the *wisdom* of taking practical-ethical values into account, what is important to note in the present connection is that the consideration in favor of religion, and of the Christian religion in particular, on the ground of experienced practical-ethical value, must always fall short of logical verification. No consideration of the value of a belief can establish it *as knowledge* in the absence of any possibility of "first-hand experience" of the object believed in; no pragmatism, however critical and circumspect, can become scientific on the basis of an absolutely dualistic epistemology.

It thus becomes evident that Wobbermin's "back-to-Schleiermacher" theology, existential as it ostensibly is and theocentric as is the faith it undertakes to express, does not advance far enough "forward from Schleiermacher" to escape being, in so far as it is or can become scientific (*Richtlinien evangelischer Theologie zur Ueberwindung der gegenwärtigen Krisis*, 1929, pp. 36, 38, etc.), merely anthropocentric, a special chapter of that branch of anthropology (or psychology, or history) which deals with religion. (Wobbermin sides with Schleiermacher as against Schaefer, who in his *Theozentrische Theologie*, 1909, 1914, condemns Schleiermacher's *Glaubenslehre* as anthropocentric, concerned with man and his faith, whereas it ought to be theocentric, i.e., made up of propositions about God and his revelation.) Not even metaphysics can transform mere imaginal intuition, or practical postulates, or unverified hypotheses, or subjective faith, even the healthful faith of a great historic fellowship, or "the science of the Christian religion with its claim to have absolute truth-value," into anything that can be called *religious knowledge* in the strict sense of the term. What can be arrived at by the way mapped out by Wobbermin is not, as he thinks, a reasonably critical, essentially Christian, faith-*knowledge*. On his dualistic presuppositions no knowledge of what he calls God is possible. But if, as has been maintained in Part III above, some verified religious or theological knowledge is possible and actual, we may find much value in Wobbermin's theology, not as reasonably critical Christian faith-*knowledge*, but as reasonably critical Christian faith-*certitude*; not a substitute for empirical religious knowledge, but its much-needed supplement. But even as a theology of faith, Wobbermin's doctrines must lack that measure of reassurance which is available to the monistic realist, who from his point of view can reasonably take *the divine as known* in and through dependably successful religious adjustment and experience as a measuring rod for *the divine as believed in* in religious faith. God as transcendent and not yet fully known cannot be inconsistent with the divine as already experienced and known.

Much of what Wobbermin has written shows great insight and wisdom; much has definite potential value even for a constructive theology which does not fully share his epistemological suppositions. He is on strong

ground, for instance, when he maintains that even if we had to give up the historicity of Jesus Christ as a person it would remain a fact that the Christian religion arose under the impression that there really was such a personal Saviour, that there is such a revelation of God in human history, available for those who seek it in faith, and that the figure of the redemptive Christ remains as a permanent norm of revelation and for faith (*Geschichte und Historie in der Religionswissenschaft*, 1911, pp. 72, 84, 86). And in the third volume of his *Systematic Theology* he shows insight and discrimination in holding to the idea of the Kingdom of God, while rejecting apocalypticism; in emphasizing the divine power of Jesus to save the world, while dismissing the virgin-birth story as inessential; in retaining the idea of miracle in the sense of direct experience of the immediate activity of God, as distinct from Scriptural marvels which are not acceptable to science and historical criticism; in seeking to retain the essential religious values bound up with the concept of the Trinity, while not insisting upon the Nicene form of the doctrine; and in retaining as essential the faith that in Jesus was and is eternal life, while leaving the critically minded free to question the resurrection of the flesh and the story of the empty tomb. He thus holds to the finality and validity of Christianity as the religion of redemption as an experience available to all in response to the essentially Christian religious faith (*Systematische Theologie*, Vol. III).

In view of the extent to which Wobbermin's indisputably liberal Christian theology shows the modifying influence of modern thought upon traditional Christian dogma, it would seem that he ought to withdraw or qualify his former condemnation of "mixed articles" of doctrine. It can hardly be said that in such a typically modern theology as Wobbermin's the influence of our "natural" knowledge upon the content of faith has worked by way of subtraction only, and not to any extent by way of addition. *Omnis negatio est determinatio*.\*

\* Our review of this distinguished theologian's religious thought has been on the whole quite appreciative. This leads me to hope that it will not be taken as unduly invidious if I end on a note of strongly felt dissent. It is a matter of regret to friends of Professor Wobbermin outside of Germany that he has chosen to ally himself with the National Socialist "German Christians" in opposition to the protesting Confessional Synod, although it is a little easier to understand such an attitude on his part in view of the reactionary conservatism of most of the Confessionalists. In a brochure entitled *Deutsches Staat und evangelische Kirche* (Gottingen, 1934; 2nd edn., Berlin, 1936), after contending that the Christian Church is not bound exclusively to any one form of organization of the State, Wobbermin undertakes a brief but pretty comprehensive defense of the National Socialist State, "the State of Adolf Hitler," and of the "great man" as Führer. It is pointed out that National Socialism is quite favorable to the thought that the Kingdom of Christ is not of this world, and that the Christian, as such, has his citizenship in heaven. As against a State organized on the basis of rights, Wobbermin defends the ideal of a State organized on the basis of a culture and a racially unitary people. He considers it a misuse of Scripture to argue from Paul's "neither Jew nor Greek . . . in Christ" that the Christian ideal of making no distinc-

tion between Jews and Aryans should be applied to the national State. The Jewish question should be considered in the light of events of recent years and of the atrocious situation which had come to exist in the higher callings and in the intellectual life of the people. In opposition to any "one-sided pacifism" it is argued that under certain circumstances war is not only morally justifiable, but a positive moral duty. Under present conditions in Germany it is a duty, Wobbermin argues, to work in every possible way for the making of the new German evangelical church ever more truly a *German Evangelical Church*, a Church of the German people. Finally, gratitude is expressed for the way in which the National Socialist movement has saved Germany from the peril of Bolshevism!

In all this, however, Wobbermin desires a church which shall remain truly evangelical, and one is glad to see his declaration that the National Socialist totalitarian claim must not be allowed to develop into a claim of absoluteness. If such a development should ever take place, it would then be the right and duty of the evangelical church, he insists, to register its most emphatic protest and withstand such a course on the ground that we ought to obey God, rather than men.

## Chapter XVII

### CRITICAL RATIONALISM

---

About a generation ago there came to be definitely differentiated in Germany a school of New Testament theologians and early church historians known as the religio-historical or comparative-religion school (*religionsgeschichtliche Schule*). These historians of primitive Christianity sought to get away from the influence of what they felt was the narrow dogmatism of the Ritschlian emphasis upon the exclusive revelation-value and absoluteness of the Christian religion. Trained in the Christian faith and still adhering to it in their personal lives, they nevertheless resolutely set themselves to investigate the nature and genesis of Christianity, without any dogmatic presuppositions as to its miraculousness, divine origin, or even as to its truth. It was to be studied as objectively and scientifically as the critical historian of religion would describe, explain and evaluate a religion different from his own. Briefly, Christianity was to be viewed not as revelation, but as history. Of this religio-historical school the chief *Systematiker* (philosopher and theologian) was Ernst Troeltsch.\* This important interpreter of religious history is also significant as representing the search for a theory of religious knowledge more satisfactory than that of the Ritschlians, but within the limits of an essentially Kantian point of view.

Speaking of the influences which have proved most decisive for his own philosophical and theological position, Troeltsch says:

“My first philosophical authorities were Kant, A. Lange, and Lotze, through whom I was gradually driven to the idea of a critical metaphysic. My theological teacher was Ritschl. But I have been led gradually into opposition to the Ritschlian system at two points; first, with regard to supernaturalism, which, it seems to me, cannot be asserted in the light of the historical study of religions, Christian and non-Christian; and secondly, as con-

\* Much of the following exposition and discussion of Troeltsch's views is taken from my paper, “Troeltsch's Theory of Religious Knowledge,” which appeared in *The American Journal of Theology* for July, 1919. Permission to reproduce this material was secured some years ago.

cerns the all too simple overcoming of natural-philosophical and metaphysical difficulties through the mere theory of the phenomenality of nature—a solution of the problem with which I could not be satisfied in the light of a wider study of philosophical literature. The particularly decisive direction was finally given to my thinking by B. Duhm, with the peculiarities of whose position, of course, I do not fully agree. But once I was directed by him to the idea of development, I had to become informed concerning Hegel and the Hegelians. Finally I noticed that, as a result of all this, I had been brought into very close approximation to Schleiermacher” (“Geschichte und Metaphysik,” *Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche*, VIII, 1898, p. 52).

In another connection he compares the attempt he makes to combine the results of historical and philosophical investigation with the similar attempt of his philosophical teacher, Dilthey, although he himself seeks, as he points out, to attain to more assured positions in this direction than those reached by Dilthey (“Zur Frage des religiösen Apriori,” *Gesammelte Schriften*, II, 1913, p. 754; cf. “Religionsphilosophie,” in *Die Philosophie im Beginn des zwanzigsten Jahrhunderts*, edited by W. Windelband, 1907, p. 429). Indeed it may be said that Troeltsch’s philosophy of religion, like that of his successor at Heidelberg, Georg Wobbermin, arose out of the attempt to revise, combine, and mutually supplement the views of the Ritschlians, and especially of the “semi-Ritschlians,” such as Julius Kaftan, theological professor in the University of Berlin (where both had studied), and the philosophical teachings of another professor in the same institution, Wilhelm Dilthey. To both younger theologians, faced with Dilthey’s *Weltanschauungslehre*, according to which, while no metaphysical system can amount to knowledge, that one is practically justified which expresses and promotes the highest type of life, the suggestion commended itself that the Ritschlian or semi-Ritschlian theology of Kaftan, with such minor modifications as might be found necessary, was, after all, philosophically the most defensible *Weltanschauung*, or metaphysical theory (Cf. “Meine Bücher,” in *Die Philosophie der Gegenwart in Selbstdarstellungen*, 1923, passim; *Gesammelte Schriften*, III, *Der Historismus und seine Probleme*, pp. 509-530).

However, the Kantian metaphysical agnosticism, freely adopted and frankly acknowledged by both Dilthey and Kaftan, has left its trace upon the religious philosophy of Troeltsch (as well as upon that of Wobbermin), in spite of the avowed intention to correct the Ritschlian anti-metaphysical bias. This will appear all the more remarkable when it is noted that, in speaking of Schleiermacher and the Ritschlians, Troeltsch characterizes their position as “dogmatic agnosticism.” This means, he

explains, that they have renounced exact and adequate knowledge in the religious realm as being impossible; that they use the term "knowledge" in a peculiar, non-theoretical sense, meaning by it attachment to confessional standards of belief in so far as these seem to be confirmed by their practical and emotional value, and holding that through religious faith access to the real grounds of life is possible, even though all confessional expressions of religion are symbolic and necessarily inadequate. Indeed the Ritschlian theology, continues Troeltsch, admitting as it does only so much of philosophy as it needs in order to get rid of philosophy, resigns itself, in its agnostic theory of religious knowledge, to being simply a mediating theology and therefore not strictly scientific. It supplements Schleiermacher's appeal to the consciousness of the religious community by turning back as far as possible in the direction of the Lutheran biblicism, thus becoming more objective without the agnosticism of the fundamental theory being given up at all ("Rückblick auf ein halbes Jahrhundert der theologischen Wissenschaft," *Gesammelte Schriften*, II, 200-209). The main task then to which Troeltsch addresses himself in his philosophy of religion is to relieve and remedy as fully as possible the agnosticism of this "agnostic-gnostic epistemology" of Schleiermacher and the Ritschlians (*Ibid.*, p. 217), and thus at the same time to make that modern theology which attempts to carry out the program of Schleiermacher less dogmatic and more nearly scientific (*Cf. ibid.*, p. 226).

More particularly, Troeltsch makes a twofold attack upon this Ritschlianism, to which he objects that it is too narrowly dogmatic, as well as being fundamentally agnostic. On the one hand he proposes to destroy and displace the lingering supernaturalism of its theology by means of *religious empiricism*. On the other hand, in opposition to its antiphilosophical and especially antimetaphysical bias, he seeks to introduce a formal *religious rationalism*. By means of empiricism he would overcome dogmatism, and by combining in Kantian fashion a critical rationalism with this empiricism he seeks to eliminate, or at least to mitigate, the agnosticism.

With reference to supernaturalism Troeltsch makes a distinction between what he calls an exclusive and an inclusive supernaturalism. The former, which would ascribe a supernatural character to one's own religion alone, he regards as forever overthrown by the criticism of Hume and Kant, who pointed out, not the impossibility of miracle, but the impossibility of proving that any particular event is miraculous. The comparative study of religions shows that the uniqueness of Christianity consists, not in the manner of its proof, as resting upon a supernatural revelation, but in its inner content. This comparative study also, in view of the fact which it discloses, that vital religion clings to the inconceivable mystery of a divine impartation to the soul, leads to the idea—

as one possible interpretation of the facts—of an *inclusive* supernaturalism which would recognize revelation and miracle in all religions, in the sense of immediate acts of God which are to be distinguished from the customary course of the soul ("Religionsphilosophie," in the *Windelband* volume cited above, pp. 453-454; "Geschichte und Metaphysik," *Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche*, VIII, 1898, pp. 45, 69; "Zur Frage des religiösen Apriori," *Gesammelte Schriften*, II, p. 766; *Glaubenslehre*, 1925, pp. 41, 42, 266-278; *Christian Thought*, London, 1923, pp. 10, 12).

Thus what Troeltsch calls a "religio-historical theology," or "theology of historicism" ("Ueber historische und dogmatische Methode in der Theologie," *Gesammelte Schriften*, II, p. 738; "Geschichte und Metaphysik," *Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche*, VIII, 1898, p. 69), would be, he thinks, genuinely possible. It would rest upon a metaphysic of history which would know how to select the simple, permanent, and true from the whole historical development, as its kernel, and how to set it forth for the religious consciousness upon the ground of faith in the rationality of human history (*Ibid.*). Troeltsch's procedure is, first, to establish the supremacy of Christianity for our own culture and civilization; secondly, to set forth the essence of Christianity; and thirdly, to give an exposition of the theological content of this essential Christianity ("The Dogmatics of the 'Religionsgeschichtliche Schule,'" *American Journal of Theology*, XVII, 1913, pp. 10-15 = *Gesammelte Schriften*, II, pp. 509-514). Thus the empirical method of appealing to the history of religion seems to give promise of liberating modern theology from its former perpetual oscillation between helpless agnosticism and the sheer dogmatism of *exclusive* supernaturalism.

Through this thought of revelation as common to all vital religion, however, an empirically oriented philosophy of religion is led to an appreciation of mysticism, and thus from the history to the psychology of religion. Here Troeltsch acknowledges the influence of William James and maintains that the result of religious psychology is to show that the original phenomenon of all religion is mysticism; that is, faith in the presence and activity of superhuman powers, with the possibility of union with them ("Wesen der Religion und der Religionswissenschaft," in *Die Kultur der Gegenwart*, Teil I, Abteilung IV, p. 485; *Psychologie und Erkenntnistheorie in der Religionswissenschaft*, 1905, pp. 17 f., 35; "Empiricism and Platonism in the Philosophy of Religion," *Harvard Theological Review*, V, 1912, p. 421 = *Gesammelte Schriften*, II, p. 384). Indeed without mysticism—that consciousness of inner contact with transcendent reality, that seeking of the supersensuous in experience and finding of the divine presence in concrete finite events and realities—without mysticism in this sense there is no real religion ("Religionsphilosophie," p. 478; *Psychologie und Erkenntnistheorie*, etc., pp. 20, 47, 52). This means then that the



one true miracle which can be experienced by every man is revelation—not enlightenment merely, but experience of the life of God in regenerating, liberating, uplifting the human soul ("Religionsphilosophie," pp. 448-449).

Here Troeltsch seems to be on the very verge of passing completely beyond the dualistic theory of religious knowledge, according to which the divine reality is never directly and immediately present in human experience, and attaining to that realistic and monistic view according to which the divine is thus directly and immediately experienced. Indeed some of his language seems fully appropriate only from this latter point of view; and yet he is deterred just here by two difficulties. Of this revelatory presence of the divine in the human the supreme and most unmistakable instance is to be found in the case of the historic Jesus—if indeed he be truly historic. But the uncertainty of historical criticism as to the true picture of the historic Jesus is here a disturbing factor. In the interests of Christian revelation-faith Troeltsch insists that not everything concerning the historic Jesus can be left forever an open question; the essential points must be decided in one way or the other ("Rückblick auf ein halbes Jahrhundert der theologischen Wissenschaft," *Gesammelte Schriften*, II, pp. 213, 222; *Glaubenslehre*, pp. 81-85, 100-103; *Christian Thought*, pp. 5, 6, 8, 21-23). But this dogmatic dictating to the historian, not what results he shall obtain, but that he shall arrive at some definite result, is resented justly enough by Bousset, who retorts that it is rather the duty of the systematic theologian to lead religion beyond the realm of controversy as to particular matters of historic fact ("The Significance of the Personality of Jesus for Belief," *Fifth International Congress of Free Christianity and Religious Progress*, Berlin, 1910, Proceedings and Papers, published 1911, p. 214; "Kantisch-Friessche Religionsphilosophie und ihre Anwendung auf die Theologie," *Theologische Rundschau*, XII, 1909, p. 429). Indeed Troeltsch himself appreciates the anomaly (pointed out by Bernouilli, *Ueber die kirchliche und wissenschaftliche Methode in der Theologie*) of theology absolutizing certain historical contents, whereas historical investigation must keep itself free from all dogmatic presuppositions (*Die Absolutheit des Christentums*, 2nd ed., 1912, pp. xii-xiii *et passim*).

The other difficulty in the way of Troeltsch's escape from a dualistic and hence more or less agnostic theory of religious knowledge is theoretically more important. There is no scientific reason, he contends, for giving up that which is to be found wherever human life exists in its natural soundness, viz., religion as faith in revelation (*Psychologie und Erkenntnistheorie*, p. 53); but the question arises, he admits, as to how revelation is to be recognized as such, or, in other words, how religious knowledge is possible. Revelation is, in any case, not a simple God-depicting effect of God's activity on the soul, but in it the human and the divine,

coexist in a complex mutual interpenetration (*Ibid.*, p. 54). Here then we pass naturally from psychology to epistemology (Cf. "Religionsphilosophie," pp. 464-465, 472; *Psychologie und Erkenntnistheorie*, pp. 17, 18, 34, 47; "Wesen der Religion und der Religionswissenschaft," *Die Kultur der Gegenwart*, T. I, Abt. IV, p. 485; "Zur Frage des religiösen Apriori," *Gesammelte Schriften*, II, pp. 760-761).

As any narrow dogmatism was to be excluded by a broad empiricism, so the agnosticism which so easily besets empiricism is to be remedied, Troeltsch thinks, by a critical rationalism (*Psychologie und Erkenntnistheorie*, p. 18). This point is felt to be a crucial one, and it is held that if we are to reach assured reality in religion, as against mere psychological assurance, the appeal must be back from James to Kant (*Ibid.*, pp. 22, 23, 24, 25). The question as to how religion, or the recognition of revelation, is possible, comes to be, from the point of view of Kantian presuppositions, What is the apriori condition of religious experience? or, in other words, How is religion possible *a priori*? Thus in Kantian fashion Troeltsch would say that without the concepts which grow out of the apriori categories of human thinking, religious sensibility is blind. But he would be quite as emphatic in urging, on the other hand, that the apriori alone, even when it is "the religious apriori," can give no religious knowledge but only empty concepts. For religious knowledge the religious apriori must have the material furnished through religious sensibility, or intuition ("Religionsphilosophie," pp. 475-476). Speculative rationalism, developing consequences by analyzing the content of a concept, is to be excluded; at most it has only the value of a surmise as to the rationality of the world (*Psychologie und Erkenntnistheorie*, pp. 21, 22). The non-empirical but purely rational criterion which Kant employed in his later *Critiques* is not to be followed in determining the marks of normal religious experience, but rather the combination of the empirical and the rational upon which the first *Critique* insisted ("Religionsphilosophie," p. 472; *Psychologie und Erkenntnistheorie*, pp. 44, 45, 51). In the critique of religion Schleiermacher, it is maintained, is a better guide than Kant, because he is so much more empirical (*Psychologie und Erkenntnistheorie*, p. 40; "Wesen der Religion," etc., *Kultur der Gegenwart*, T. I, Abt. IV, p. 476). What Troeltsch is interested in is not the creation of a new religion of reason but the rationalization and regulation of the religious life as it actually exists; his method is not theological rationalism but criticism, which would effect a synthesis of empiricism and rationalism ("Religionsphilosophie," p. 486; *Psychologie und Erkenntnistheorie*, pp. 23, 25, 46). In other words, the rationalism of Troeltsch in religion is a *formal* rationalism; it assumes that the religious apriori is already present in the most elementary religious experience, imparting to its fundamental nature the character of rational necessity (*Psychologie und Erkenntnistheorie*,

pp. 22, 23, 45, 51). Mysticism is the union of pure or rational religion with impulse, the actualizing of the religious apriori (*Ibid.*, p. 47). As it is in general, so it is in religion; what is at once the secret of reality and the fundamental problem of knowledge is the harmony of the apriori with the actual, of the rational with the extra-rational, of the universal with the unique (*Ibid.*, p. 49); the ideal is a mystical, historical religion in thoroughly rational form.

Thus Troeltsch regards himself as the true exponent of the Kantian critical principle. As the first *Critique* faces the problem of the philosophy of science, viz., What are the apriori conditions of the possibility of cognitive experience? as the second *Critique* faces the problem of the philosophy of morality, viz., What are the apriori conditions of the possibility of moral experience? and the third *Critique*, the problem of the philosophy of art, viz., What are the apriori conditions of the possibility of aesthetic experience? so, according to Troeltsch, a fourth *Critique* must face the problem of the philosophy of religion, viz., What are the apriori conditions of the possibility of religious experience? In every instance, it is contended, genuine values are to be found where we have the union of rational form with empirical content. Valid religion then is not, as Kant himself seems almost to have supposed, religion within the limits of mere speculative reason, the product of rationalistic speculation, but actual, empirical religion—historical, more or less mystical religion—reduced by criticism to an adequately rational form.

While Troeltsch, however, follows the procedure of Kant's first *Critique* in insisting upon the combination of empirical content with the rational form, it is obvious that he means by the religious apriori something other than space, time, and causality, with which that *Critique* is concerned. What he has in mind is rather a religious apriori similar to the ethical apriori of the *Critique of Practical Reason* and the teleological-aesthetic apriori of the *Critique of Judgment*. As the ethical apriori gives to moral judgments the character of rational necessity, and as the teleological and the aesthetic apriori render the same service to their respective judgments, so, it is surmised, a critical determination of the apriori element in religious experience would reveal the basis for rational necessity in religious judgments. Thus Troeltsch regards it as only a naturalistic one-sidedness in the Marburg neo-Kantians that they allow only the first apriori, that of the *Critique of Pure Reason*, to be valid, and reject that of the later *Critiques* as being simply what they stigmatize as the "theological and dualistic residue" of the Königsberg philosopher's thinking, whereas in reality its place in the thought of Kant is quite fundamental ("Zur Frage des religiösen Apriori," *Gesammelte Schriften*, II, pp. 757-758. In an article entitled "Das religiösen Apriori bei Ernst Troeltsch und Rudolf Otto," in the *Zeitschrift für Philosophie und Philosophische*

*Kritik*, 1911, Karl Bornhausen says: "It ought not to be possible for Troeltsch to brush aside the neo-Kantian conception of the apriori so disrespectfully as he does. . . . The question arises whether clear insight into the changing character of our whole spiritual and cultural world does not compel us to give up the expression 'apriori' for the peculiarity of the ethical, aesthetic, and religious rational presuppositions. It is the epistemological apriori, the function of unity, which transforms striving into will, imagination into aesthetic contemplation, and feeling into religious faith." Pp. 196, 197). Rationality in science, in art, in morals, and in religion has in each case a shade of difference in its meaning, but it always means autonomous validity ("Zur Frage des religiösen Apriori," *Gesammelte Schriften*, II, p. 762).

The possibility of rationalizing actual religion does not mean, according to Troeltsch, that any direct proof of the existence of God is to be attempted; all that can be carried through successfully is to show that there is an apriori law of the formation of religious ideas lying in the essence of reason, so that religious consciousness comes to be a necessity for the rational man ("Wesen der Religion," etc., *Kultur der Gegenwart*, T. I, Abt. IV, p. 486). "When we attend to the rational law involved in being religious it can be shown from the feeling of inner necessity and obligation that this being religious is a law of normal consciousness. . . . Being religious belongs to the apriori of reason" (*Psychologie und Erkenntnistheorie*, pp. 43f.). As in all other demonstrations of worth, the proof of the rational necessity of religion is accomplished ultimately by falling back upon the universally valid concepts which are immanent within thought or reason (*Ibid.*, p. 18); and one of these, it would appear, is the concept of God, the Object of religious faith. It is a fact that religion in all its forms asserts the real existence of the object of its faith ("Wesen der Religion," *Kultur der Gegenwart*, T. I, Abt. IV, p. 487).

In his article "On the Question of the Religious Apriori" (*Gesammelte Schriften*, II, p. 761), Troeltsch agrees with his critic, Spiess, that the reduction of the religious phenomenon to a contained apriori proves nothing for the truth and right of the religious consciousness, but only provides against the losing of religion in the process of eliminating irrational forms of religion, such as the eschatological. But then, he claims, neither the right of the ethical, nor that of the aesthetic, nor even that of the logical is *proved* by the revelation of its apriori character. That by which all is proved is itself not proved. But the science of religion leaves religion standing as a normal constituent of human life, and regulates it out of its own apriori (*Psychologie und Erkenntnistheorie*, p. 53).

Further than this Troeltsch does not give us much information as to what the religious apriori is (Bornhausen, in the article cited, pp. 193, 196, characterizes it as an unknown  $x$ , not yet solved. Bousset maintains that

Troeltsch fails to solve the problem as to how to derive from all religions and justify a norm for the phenomena of a particular religion. "Kantisch-Friessche Religionsphilosophie," *Theologische Rundschau*, XII, 1909, p. 434). There are some further clues, however. As against Kant, it is claimed that there is no ready-made system of categories, but that, as life grows, the latent rational content will be brought out by further analysis (*Psychologie und Erkenntnistheorie*, pp. 31, 51. This suggests to the empirically minded critic the interesting problem of the genesis of the religious apriori; but Troeltsch is too much of a Kantian, of course, to admit the legitimacy of such an investigation). The law of the validity and apriori character of religion is to be sought, as it was by Schleiermacher, in the sense of the unity of the finite and the infinite which flows out of the essence and inner necessity of consciousness ("Wesen der Religion," *Kultur der Gegenwart*, T. I, Abt. IV, p. 476). The religious apriori, moreover, gives a basis of substantiality to the inner unity of the other aprioris (*Ibid.*, p. 486. This is significant in connection with Windelband's definition of holiness, or religious value, as made up of the true, the beautiful, and the good. Does Troeltsch mean that we may gather, from the nature of religion as a state not only of aspiration after the supreme ideals but of dependence upon an ideal reality, that the category of substantiality belongs to the religious apriori?). Naturally, too, it is in the highest religion that the apriori comes to its purest expression, and it is just this circumstance which makes that religion the highest (*Ibid.*, p. 476).

There can be little doubt as to Troeltsch's significance for present-day religious thought. His relation to the older Ritschlianism is best seen perhaps in his modification of the value-judgment doctrine. He bases his theology upon the recognition of the supreme *value* of Christianity among the religions of the world ("Rückblick auf ein halbes Jahrhundert der theologischen Wissenschaft," *Gesammelte Schriften*, II, pp. 244-225), thus carrying the Ritschlian principle into his "religionsgeschichtliche" theology. But he goes further and points out, after the manner of some other epistemological dualists, that in our recognition of the application of our representations to objects beyond our consciousness there is implied a faith in the normality of our intellect, and thus in the possibility of attaining to valid knowledge. This means that he not only admits but insists that a value-judgment is the foundation and strength of all human knowledge. But what he is especially concerned to make clear is that this value-judgment is one which establishes faith in the laws of thought and goes on to make use of these laws ("Geschichte und Metaphysik," *Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche*, VIII, 1898, p. 46). Hence the unreasonableness of the Ritschlian distrust of rational-empirical metaphysics. In Troeltsch's opinion the Ritschlian value-judgment theory, by appealing

to Kant and putting all emphasis upon the distinction between the theoretical and the practical reason, and by always emphasizing only the *practical* indispensableness of the values claimed for religion, loses the necessity of the object to which these values belong, and so goes in the direction of the abyss of a theology of mere wishes and illusions (*Psychologie und Erkenntnistheorie*, pp. 27, 28).

Troeltsch himself, however, with his ideal of a rational religion of historical, mystical revelation, comes very near, as has been intimated, to making good his escape from a dualistic and consequently agnostic theory of religious knowledge. Moreover, he proves his faith by his works and expressly provides for, and himself attempts, a metaphysical synthesis of theology with our scientific knowledge of the world. In addition to the speculative rationalism which he repudiates, and the formal rationalism upon which he chiefly depends, he would also make an auxiliary use of what he calls a "regressive rationalism," which proceeds from the facts of experience to draw inferences as to their grounds in reality (*Ibid.*, pp. 22, 28). In this way then he claims—not through deductive metaphysics but through an elaboration and unification of experience in ultimate concepts—a philosophical treatment of the idea of God is made possible ("Wesen der Religion," *Kultur der Gegenwart*, T. I, Abt. IV, p. 487). This metaphysic of religion will not be a mere apologetic but a re-working of the God-idea and a fitting of it into the modern scientific view of the world, which view, by the way, cuts very deeply into the *traditional* notion of God (*Ibid.*, p. 488). But it is the metaphysic of spirit which is most imperatively needed, Troeltsch thinks, by the theologian. The metaphysics of nature and of the Absolute must be left for those who have accurate knowledge of the natural sciences; and from such the theologian must be willing to learn ("Geschichte und Metaphysik," *Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche*, VIII, 1898, p. 45). And so through religious metaphysics, with its harmony of religious and scientific knowledge, the religious starting-point can be, as against positivism, finally justified ("Wesen der Religion," *Kultur der Gegenwart*, T. I, Abt. IV, p. 487).

This claim, however, suggests a criticism. Troeltsch's metaphysics would undertake to be a synthesis of the selected religious world-view with the assured results of scientific investigation; but if the religious world-view which enters into this synthesis is not finally justified save by the fact that it can be thus synthesized, are we sure that it is finally justified at all? It may figure as a permissible belief, but scarcely as assured knowledge. For might not different religious world-views conceivably agree equally well with our present scientific view of the world? Troeltsch elsewhere recognizes the difficulty, admitting that the metaphysics of the relation of nature to the spiritual life is difficult and can arrive only at results which are highly hypothetical and at best but ap-

proximately true ("Geschichte und Metaphysik," *Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche*, VIII, 1898, p. 44). And yet in an earlier article he had already admitted that without certainty of the mutual agreement of the Christian world-view on the one hand and the facts and their scientific elaboration on the other hand Christian experience would not be able to maintain its vital efficiency ("Die christliche Weltanschauung und die wissenschaftlichen Gegenströmungen," *Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche*, III, 1893, p. 495).

This leads us to mention a criticism which has been made against Troeltsch from the point of view of religion itself. It is connected with what must be fairly evident from what has just been said, that Troeltsch fails to provide in his method for a full recovery of religious certitude after the subjection of religious beliefs to philosophical examination. And where certainty of belief is inadequate, the content believed in is of course imperiled. Criticism in the name of religion then has been urged against Troeltsch by a great many conservatives and conservative liberals. Kattenbusch thinks of him in his relation to the older Ritschlianism as comparable to Erasmus in his relation to Luther (*Von Schleiermacher zu Ritschl*, p. 80), and with awkward frankness raises the question whether Christianity will stand being handled so scientifically as Troeltsch recommends, or rather, categorically demands (*Ibid.*, p. 76). Ecke also speaks for many when he says that Troeltsch brings the Christian faith into an almost too dangerous dependence upon *Welterkennen* (*Die theologische Schule Albrecht Ritschls und die Kirche der Gegenwart*, I, 1897, p. 124); and among those who "view with alarm the exodus of young men after the religious *a priori*" Troeltsch mentions E. W. Mayer, Häring, Julius Kaftan, Herrmann, F. Traub, and Wobbermin ("Zur Frage des religiösen *Apriori*," *Gesammelte Schriften*, II, p. 757, note).

It is perhaps by the last mentioned that the directly religious criticism of Troeltsch's method has been most fairly expressed—a fact due in large part, no doubt, to the twofold circumstance that Wobbermin is not only interested, like Troeltsch, in the transition from the psychology to the epistemology of religion, but also advocates, like Troeltsch again, the introduction of metaphysics into theology. He is thus a not wholly unsympathetic critic. He offers as an objection, however, to the method by which Troeltsch seeks to reach the required religious epistemology, that it is too rationalistic. It rests upon the assumption that fundamental to religion there is an element of rational necessity, which is to be set forth ever more purely and completely. To this Wobbermin objects in the first place that it leads to a "rationalizing of religion," in keeping with which in the last analysis the only ultimately valuable element in religion would be its rationally necessary and universally valid content, all other experiential value being discounted as comparatively unimportant. But vital

religious experience, Wobbermin insists, appeals to *revelation* as its peculiar foundation and cannot recognize the rational and universally valid as a decisive norm for passing judgment upon its claims to validity, least of all with reference to its most central and essential content. Wobbermin's second objection to Troeltsch's epistemological program is closely related to the first. The rationalistic epistemology, following upon the empirical psychology, minimizes, he claims, if it does not entirely remove, the significance of the religious experience itself; reason tends to be made a substitute for religious experience instead of occupying the merely supplementary position to which it is entitled ("Psychologie und Erkenntniskritik der religiösen Erfahrung," in *Weltanschauung*, 1911, pp. 353-355).

The important difference between Troeltsch and Wobbermin goes back to the fact that while religion has indeed its own inner basis of certainty, the doctrinal contents with reference to which claims of certainty are put forth are immensely varied and mutually contradictory, especially when different religions are compared. Troeltsch regards the essentially Ritschlian position which Wobbermin here represents as being altogether too narrow and dogmatic, and feels the need of some universally acceptable standard for the measurement of religious beliefs. Wobbermin, on the other hand, fears that the rationalistic norm adopted by Troeltsch may do violence to the really valid content and certainty of Christian faith. If the problem were simply to find some intermediate ground such as ought to prove acceptable to both sides, one might suggest that more be made of the criterion of general spiritual and especially ethical value as an indication of truth, at least from the point of view of what we may call hopeful thinking. While not yielding theoretical certainty, this criticism would be universal enough in its procedure to avoid much of the narrow dogmatism of which Troeltsch complains. At the same time it would be conservative enough of what is religiously vital to give promise of retaining, as demanded by Wobbermin, the essentials of Christian belief. Moreover, there is already a strong tendency to proceed from considerations of value to make affirmation of real existence, in the thought of both thinkers. Every metaphysic, according to Troeltsch, must find its roots in practical life (*Protestantism and Progress*, 1912, p. ix), while Wobbermin agrees that the metaphysics of faith must satisfy the practical-ethical test ("Psychologie und Erkenntniskritik," etc., *Weltanschauung*, p. 363). It is a further question, however, whether this rather loose religious pragmatism would suffice to guard most thinkers who might be willing to accept the epistemological presuppositions of Troeltsch and Wobbermin from drawing the agnostic conclusion. In abandoning dogmatic religious certitude, as Troeltsch proposes to do, and in repudiating a rationalistic philosophical certainty, as Wobbermin does, it is quite conceivable that



even the person of positive religious interest should lose religious certainty altogether.

The point, however, which is of chief interest for our present purpose is not the question whether Troeltsch sufficiently guarantees religious certainty by means of metaphysics, or could do so by way of an argument from value; it lies rather in the question whether or not he succeeds in vindicating a place for religious knowledge by means of his formal rationalism. He is not to be interpreted as carrying the neo-Kantian rejection of the *Ding-an-sich* into the religious realm, for then he would have to confine himself, like the "Marburg school" of philosophers, to "religion within the limits of mere humanity"; he could recognize the divine only in the realm of the ideal, and not in the realm of actual being, or as an Object of dependence. Rather is he to be interpreted as the follower of his dualistic Kantian teachers, Dilthey and Kaftan, and of the Ritschlian school in general. It is from this point of view, it would seem, that we must interpret his appeal to an absolutely apriori element in religious experience. If the object of experience has intelligible form and even its existence as Object only by virtue of the constructive activity of the knowing subject with its apriori rational forms, how then is the religious subject to *know* the religious Object as that ultimate Reality upon which all religious subjects are believed to depend? Troeltsch seems to feel that there is here an insuperable difficulty in the way of bona fide religious knowledge, and so, instead of trying to rationalize religion by getting scientific knowledge of the religious *Object*, he seeks simply to determine as rationally as possible the religious *subject*. The religious Object, or better, the religious *Ding-an-sich*, being assumed to be really inaccessible to immediate experience, cannot be *known* to be truly represented by even the most rational thought; it can only be *believed* to be thus represented. Hence the rational determination of the subject would simply mean acting as reasonably as possible when real knowledge is impossible. And so Troeltsch, logically led, to reject the idea of the possibility of any theology as a science of the religious Object,\* has in the end to admit a fundamental agnosticism, in spite of his appeal to the religious apriori and his recourse to metaphysics. The agnostic and but limited character of dog-

\* See "The Dogmatics of the 'Religionsgeschichtliche Schule,'" *American Journal of Theology*, XVII, 1913 p. 16 = *Gesammelte Schriften*, II, pp. 514-515. Cf. "Zur Frage des religiösen Apriori," *Gesammelte Schriften*, II, pp. 755-756: "The general life-question of the present is not the need to attach systematic theology to the methods of science and to make it of equal dignity with the other faculties. The systematic theology of today is too closely bound up with great ecclesiastical corporations and political powers, and with the instinctive life of the great masses of the populace, for it to need to ask for scientific methods and attachments to universal thought. . . . Moreover, attachment to 'science' is very precarious, for the reason that there is here no common methodological procedure, and to win an attachment to the one group would necessarily mean to lose connection with the other."

matics comes, he says, from the agnostic character of all religious knowledge in general, which everywhere consists in a cautious modifying of already formulated symbols and adapting them to the growing whole of human knowledge ("Rückblick auf ein halbes Jahrhundert der theologischen Wissenschaft," *Gesammelte Schriften*, II, p. 224).

Our exposition of Troeltsch's religious epistemology has stressed, possibly a little one-sidedly, the rationalistic character of his thought. As we have made clear, his was not a speculative but a merely formal or critical rationalism, a rational empiricism; he did not think of deriving knowledge of reality from the empty forms of rationality. But neither did he go to the extreme of critical rationalism; he was on his guard against imposing the forms of rationality too forcibly upon the raw material of experienced and intuitively apprehended reality. He recognized and indeed made much of the elements of individuality in nature, of freedom in man, and of creativity in the specifically divine, especially in the realm of religious experience. Less pronounced in this emphasis than Bergson, his thought here approximates that of Eucken. Indeed, toward the close of his life there were indications that he was beginning to see something worth considering even in irrationalism (*Christian Thought*, p. 23; cf. *Glaubenslehre*, Sections 3, 9, 12, 16, 18, 27; *Der Historismus und seine Probleme*, passim).

Troeltsch's ideal of a rational empirical religion is, in its broad outlines, undoubtedly valid; but its realization would be greatly facilitated by one or two fundamental modifications of his philosophical presuppositions. In the first place, let us substitute for the Kantian absolute dualism of content of experience on the one hand and independent reality on the other, a critical, common-sense realism with regard to things in general and the religious Object (divinely functioning Reality) in particular. Such a critically monistic realism would recognize not only as possibility but as fact the presenting to the human knowing subject (in complexes of empirical elements) of various independent realities, one of which is a factor, not identifiable in religious perception with our empirical selves, but a factor which makes for righteousness in and through us, according as we relate ourselves thereto in a certain discoverable way. In the second place, let us substitute for the dogmatic absolute apriorism an empirical relative apriorism, such as would recognize the "religious apriori" as but relatively apriori, and the product, ultimately, of the activity of the human psychical subject in experimental relations with religious reality. Then there will appear the necessity of formulating, in place of Troeltsch's still essentially eclectic dogmatics, some definitely verified laws of empirical theology on the basis of successful experimental religion with its experienced revelation of the divine Reality.

Still, when that has been done, there will remain around the inner

circle of verified religious knowledge a zone of reasonably possible, subjectively assured religious intuition, or faith. And in formulating this we may gain helpful suggestions from several of the theologians whose thought we have been considering in this and several previous chapters.

Before proceeding to a consideration of another important representative of critical rationalism, Rudolf Otto, we shall briefly note two other authors whose views are of interest in connection with our examination of Troeltsch. H. Süsskind, in the course of a critical article entitled "Zur Theologie Troeltschs" (*Theologische Rundschau*, XVII, 1914), maintains that the Ritschlian doctrine of historic revelation as the ground of faith is ambiguous. Historic revelation is indeed the psychological ground of faith, according to Süsskind, but not the logical ground. It produces certitude, but does not prove truth. It could accomplish the latter, only if the ethical character of Jesus could be taken as sufficient proof of the truth of his gospel. No such way of reasoning being at all convincing, Süsskind agrees with Troeltsch that the only feasible way of establishing the truth of religion is through the discovery of the religious apriori (*Ibid.*, pp. 59-61). In view, however, of Süsskind's own previous acknowledgment that no one has any clear knowledge of just what the content of this religious apriori is (*Ibid.*, p. 54), it would seem that when he wrote (before his untimely death in the Great War), while this "only way" of the "high and dry" religious apriori road was the scene of considerable construction-work, it bore the sign "no thoroughfare," without any indication of a passable detour. This was the situation in which many religious thinkers found themselves at that time, and since the War not much further construction-work has been done upon this religious apriori road.

What we would suggest in this connection would be chiefly this. If the ethical character of Jesus can be reasonably explained as in any significant measure due to his religious faith and adjustment and thus to the response of a divinely working reality to that same attitude and adjustment, and if the Christian gospel can be rightly interpreted as the message of moral uplift, with the consequent tendencies toward well-being, through the response of Reality to an essentially Christlike attitude and adjustment, then the ethical character of Jesus is the most striking individual item in the best kind of evidence we have for the essential truth of his gospel. If, however, the gospel of Christ (either the gospel of Jesus himself or the gospel about Christ) be interpreted as including certain statements about the nature of God, we can perhaps have adequate empirical *proof* only to the extent that we can find support for our theistic theory in the perceptible world of nature and human life. And just here the growing manifestation of the divine in rightly adjusted religious lives will be properly and significantly evidential. As for the value and limita-

tions of the appeal to the religious apriori in connection with this problem, we have indicated our position on that topic already.

Three of the German theologians whose views we have examined, namely, Scheibe, Wobbermin, and Troeltsch, have been found to occupy much the same position, broadly considered. Presupposing a Kantian dualistic epistemology, at least with reference to the religious object, they have nevertheless claimed "religious knowledge," not in the objective, scientific sense, but in the sense of subjective certitude of religious reality and truth, supported by rational-empirical metaphysical thinking which, without attempting to be speculatively demonstrative, aims to coordinate religious with scientific knowledge in a theoretically tenable religious world-view. We have suggested that the so-called "religious knowledge" of these and other epistemological dualists would be better acknowledged to be, in the first instance, mere imaginal intuition, and our claim has been that, even with the aid of the modestly and reasonably self-critical type of metaphysics advocated by the philosophical theologians named, they are unable to transform their religious intuition into knowledge in the strict sense of the word; it remains of the nature of surmise as to the unknown and unknowable, however assured subjectively and however defensible as a theoretical possibility. It seems appropriate briefly to consider here the views of a philosopher whose position is closely similar to that of the theologians mentioned, but who uses, for the subjective religious certitude of transcendent divine reality, the suggested term "intuition." I refer to Johannes Volkelt.

The religious attitude, as Volkelt sees it, is that of a non-demonstrative but intuitive or immediate subjective certainty with reference to a trans-empirical and non-experienceable reality (*Was ist Religion?*, p. 10). It is immediate subjective certainty of being in unity with the Infinite, the Absolute, or in common parlance, God (*Ibid.*, p. 13). This feeling of unity involves, of course, an intuition of the World-Ground as Absolute Spirit. We cannot feel unity with a mechanism, nor with mere Power, or blind Will (*Ibid.*, pp. 14, 15). Now from the critical point of view it must be acknowledged, Volkelt admits, that this subjective intuition concerning the transcendent may possibly be illusory (*Ibid.*, p. 13). Some critically established confirmation of the religious intuition must therefore be sought. The question, as Volkelt sees it, is whether the modern man can hold to a monism of Spirit (*Ibid.*, p. 18). Metaphysical support of this view is necessary, this philosopher thinks, for the salvation of religion (*Ibid.*, p. 24). He claims that metaphysics is possible—not speculative demonstration, but an inductive and hypothetical metaphysics (*Ibid.*, p. 19). In this way, then, the life of religion is to be saved.

It turns out, however, that in Volkelt's philosophy the metaphysics by

which absolute or monistic spiritualism is to be established is based upon two main doctrines, namely, first, that absolute reality is the realization of absolute values, from which it is inferred that it must be Absolute Spirit; and second, that any such "miracle" of creative evolution as the coming of the conscious out of the unconscious is quite impossible (*Ibid.*, p. 21). But both of these doctrines, whether true or not, are themselves manifestly either unverified hypotheses or unproved dogmas, and so they cannot give much support, on critical grounds, to the purely subjective feeling or intuition concerning the inexperienceable which they are adduced to defend. Evidently then, Volkelt's combination of subjective intuitionism with unverifiable metaphysics does not suffice to eliminate a critical agnosticism with reference to the religious object from the logical implications of a dualistic epistemology.

We now turn to a consideration of the religious epistemology of Rudolf Otto. Influenced by the movement for the revival of the philosophy of the early post-Kantian, J. K. Fries, a movement inaugurated by his philosophical colleague at Göttingen, Leonard Nelson (*Ueber das sogenannte Erkenntnisproblem*, 1908), Otto undertook to elaborate and defend a Kantian-Friesian philosophy of religion (*Kantisch-Fries'sche Religionsphilosophie und ihre Anwendung auf die Theologie*, 1909; Eng. tr., *The Philosophy of Religion Based on Kant and Fries*, 1931). His general point of view was adopted and defended by his colleague in the New Testament chair, Wilhelm Bousset (*Theologische Rundschau*, XII, 1909, pp. 419 ff., 471 ff.; *Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche*, XXI, 1911, pp. 141 ff.).

According to Otto the religious apriori, which philosophers of religion must seek (*Kantisch-Fries'sche Religionsphilosophie*, pp. 2, 3), is to be found as one of the 'ideas' of pure reason. In scientific knowledge, as Kant maintained, an apriori element, necessarily implicit in all sense-experience, comes to expression, schematized as principles in the forms of space and time (*Ibid.*, pp. 28-41). But the categories, as pure apriori concepts, give us a purely rational knowledge, independently of experience, as to the fundamental character of all existential things; we know conditions to which all things must correspond. In thus assuming that rationality shows us what reality *must* be, and not simply what it *may* be, Otto, like Nelson, follows Fries rather than Kant (*Ibid.*, pp. 35, 36). Space and time, however, lead us into contradiction when we take them without limitation; we are assured by reason, therefore, that existence cannot be temporal or spatial (*Ibid.*, p. 37). But just as we are assured, immediately and apriori, of non-temporal, non-spatial existence, in view of the contradictions involved in the supposition of extension in space and succession in time without limit (*Ibid.*, pp. 51-55, 63-65), so, in view of the contradiction involved in supposing that everything is composite and nothing simple, we are like-

wise assured of an ultimately simple existence, incapable of disintegration into parts, and so, presumably, indestructible, immortal. This Otto identifies with the soul (*Ibid.*, pp. 55-56, 65-67). So too, in view of the contradiction involved in supposing that there are no free causes, but only completely predetermined causes, and so an infinite sum of past causes, we are convinced, immediately and *a priori*, that there must be free causes, readily identifiable with human agents (*Ibid.*, pp. 56-57, 67-68). And so finally, in view of the contradiction involved in supposing an infinite series of conditions, we find assurance, immediately and *a priori*, of the existence of an unconditioned and necessary being beyond and above the realm of the conditioned which we call the world; and for Otto this unconditioned Being is presumably the Deity (*Ibid.*, pp. 57-58, 68-72).

But inasmuch as these convictions of realities which must be, and which seem identifiable with freedom, immortal souls, and the Absolute, or God, are derived from pure reason, and go beyond anything which can be verified in sense-experience, they are regarded as content of faith (*Glaube*)—albeit rationally necessary faith—as distinguished from scientific knowledge (*Wissen*) (*Ibid.*, p. 81). But of the nature of these non-temporal, non-spatial objects, and of God in particular, not only can we have no empirical knowledge; we cannot even have any *positive* concept of them. All we can be sure of about God is that there must be such a being as is incapable of being represented in literal truth by means of concepts derived from our experience of spatial and temporal objects. In other words, our rational thought of the immortal soul, of freedom of action and of the Absolute, or God, while necessarily involving their reality, must remain ever only negative—at least in so far as it can be regarded as literally true (*Ibid.*, p. 82). But this rationally necessary though purely negative concept of the Unconditioned Absolute, or God, for which it is impossible to gain scientific verification, and to which it is not even possible to give a positive content which can be taken as literally true, is nevertheless the rational basis of religious faith. It is the *rational religious apriori*, and it must be at least dimly apprehended if the purely scientific task of the history of religion is to be possible of fulfilment; without it religious events could not be distinguished from other historical phenomena (*Ibid.*, p. 93).

But while all knowledge of God and all positive and literally true thought about God are alike excluded, according to Otto's philosophy, it is nevertheless true that we can have a positive *feeling* of the reality and presence of the God of religion, and upon the peculiar quality of this religious feeling in any particular case is based a presentiment, intuition, surmise (*Ahnung*) as to the nature of God and as to his relation to the world and to man (*Ibid.*, pp. 83, 111-122). Under the influence of this religious feeling, the religious subject judges freely concerning the Unconditioned and Eternal (*Ibid.*, p. 125). Instead of the literally true but

purely negative concepts of rational faith, the religious man makes use of the positive terms of the language of sense-experience in order to express this religious feeling and to represent its transcendent Object; but all this positive language of religion is purely symbolical; the world of faith is represented in terms of the world of science (*Ibid.*, p. 83), but what we have here is not only not scientific knowledge; it is not even literally true. On the other hand, in so far as the terms used are appropriate from the point of view of religious feeling, such positive use of symbolism is justified; as free judgments out of pure feeling, religious judgments are valid without proof (*Ibid.*, p. 194).

Otto seeks, in the light of our greatly augmented knowledge of the history of religion, to develop the religious side of the Friesian doctrine, further even than was done by DeWette (*Ibid.*, pp. 122-124; Ch. XIII). The doctrine of feeling and intuitional surmise (*Ahnung*) can be used, he claims, as a key to the different historic formations of religion (*Ibid.*, p. 125). Moreover, upon the basis of the Christian revelation, which, like all revelation, is essentially the breaking through of divine grace, appropriated as such not through the understanding but through feeling (*Ibid.*, pp. 144, 197-198, 199), a place is found for Christian theology, not indeed as a science of God, or even as a metaphysics of God, but as part of the science of the Christian religion (*Ibid.*, p. 192). This is not a merely descriptive science, however; it undertakes to answer the question of the truth of the Christian religion, and so it must be normative as well as descriptive (*Ibid.*, p. 195).

It thus becomes evident that, as in the case of Schleiermacher and those many others of whose "modern theology" Schleiermacher has been acknowledged as "father," the so-called theology, in so far as it has been or has aimed to be scientific, has been anthropocentric, instead of being theocentric, as all theology naturally ought to be, so too it is in the theology of Rudolf Otto. As in the case of Schleiermacher and many of the Ritschlians, so in the case of Otto, there are times when the theologian seems to be speaking the language of direct religious perception, of some sort of direct or monistic realism in religious epistemology. The reader is likely to feel this especially in connection with Otto's doctrine of divination, or recognition of the holy (*Das Heilige*; Eng. tr., *The Idea of the Holy*, 1923; *Religious Essays*, 1931), of which we shall have more to say presently, and in view of his sympathetic attitude toward mysticism (*West-östliche Mystik*, 1926; Eng. tr., *Mysticism East and West*, 1932). But when the theology is viewed from the standpoint of critical reason, it is seen to be simply an attempt to express feelings about the supersensible in terms of mere symbols and figures of speech drawn from the objects of the sensible realm. As such, therefore, theology, even at its best, as Otto conceives it, is not merely not known to be literally true. On the contrary, God is (sup-

posedly) known to be unknowable, and theology to be not literally true, but literally not true, of the Eternal, i.e., of the timeless object in which religion at all times is interested. For Otto, then, theology becomes indistinguishable from mythology, except as one calls one's own religious mythology, theology, and the theology of other religions, mythology. Otto's systematic theology turns out, then, to be simply an especially good example of the theology of a religious agnostic. That God, in the sense of a purely negative definition, really exists is not denied; rather is the belief in God held to be rationally necessary; but what God is can never be known, so that the field is left open for the religious imagination, working under the impulse of religious feeling. But of all of the constructions of religious imagination and pious surmise it must be said that they can only be valid subjectively; it can always be assumed that, literally speaking, they are not objectively true.

It may be felt by some readers of Otto's *Idea of the Holy* that the comparatively early work on the neo-Friesian philosophy of religion, to which our present exposition has thus far been confined, does not fairly represent his later and supposedly more constructive views. But for this surmise no adequate reason, I think, can be given. Years after the appearance of his *Idea of the Holy*, in answer to a question put by the present writer, Professor Otto indicated that the views expressed in the earlier work still represented the philosophical background against which his discussions of "the holy" were to be understood. Otto's religious interest was keen and positive, but his inheritance from Fries, and back of Fries from Kant, was logically unfavorable to any positive theology which could reasonably claim at any point to be literally true, not to speak of such a thing as its being verified knowledge.\*

The search for the rational apriori of religion, then, conducted by Otto along Kantian-Friesian lines, led him to find the root of religion in the wholly negative concept of the unconditioned, non-temporal, non-spatial absolute being, *wholly other*, qualitatively as well as numerically, as compared with finite things and persons. This was Otto's answer to the question, What is it, either in the rational constitution of the human mind, or in ideas derivative from reason independently of religious experience, that accounts for the possibility of religious experience and for the framing of the characteristic ideas of religion? But it did not seem plausible to regard this very abstract and wholly negative idea of God as the sole cause and full explanation of the very manifold, vivid and dynamic experiential reality of religion. And so Otto found himself still faced with the problem of the necessary apriori, the *fons et origo*, of religion.

\* Cf. Reinhold Niebuhr's statement (*The Review of Religion*, March, 1940), "In the field of religion any statement which is literally true has no particular significance."



This time he raised the problem at first in more general terms. Instead of raising the question as to what in the *rational* nature of man made him religious, he asked what anywhere in the native constitution of man accounted for his interpretation of his experience in religious terms. Was it perchance something in some other side of the human make-up than the rational intellect? This seemed plausible, in view of the existence of religion among very primitive tribes with but little capacity for abstract philosophical reasoning. What, then, in the non-rational or irrational constitution of man accounts for his being religious and making for himself an idea of God? In other words, the quest for the *rational* apriori of religion having proved somewhat disappointing, having yielded a result not really adequate to account for historical religion, Otto takes up the quest for the *irrational* apriori of religion.

Like Schleiermacher before him, Otto turned his attention to the feeling-side of religious experience, with the result that his analysis yielded a feeling, not of mere fear and not only of ultimate dependence, but of mystery and awe, comparable with but distinguishable from the feeling of "the uncanny," a feeling furthermore of creatureliness and unworthiness, a feeling of the reality and presence, in some sense, of an overpowering, urgent reality, a *mysterium tremendum et fascinosum*, "wholly other," as compared with material things and with man himself. This intuitively felt religious reality and presence was, in short, the holy, the divine, and the conscious awareness and recognition of this special object of religious interest might be called accordingly divination (*The Idea of the Holy*, *passim*).

Otto points out further that while in highly developed, ethical religions the idea of the holy includes an ideal and especially an ethical element, this is not, at least conspicuously, true of all religion. Seeking therefore not only to isolate but to distinguish verbally the specifically religious element, as being presumably a unique value coördinate with the true, the beautiful and the morally good, he coined the term "numinous" from the Latin word *numen*, to designate the content of the holy, *minus* such imported elements of meaning as the moral or otherwise spiritually ideal. The term *numinous* was then used as applying to the unique and distinguishing quality or value of the specifically religious object, and at the same time to the specific quality of the religious consciousness as such. The answer to the question of the apriori of religion thus takes on for Otto the following form: The rational apriori of religion, apprehended in *Glaube*, is the rationally necessary idea of an unconditioned, eternal, non-spatial, ultimate reality, wholly other as contrasted with all that can be definitely experienced or thought by us; but there is also (in *Ahnung*) an irrational or non-rational foundation for religion in human nature, namely the capacity for intuitively feeling the presence of a mysterious

reality, transcendent and "wholly other," both as an existence and in quality and value (*Ibid.* Already in *Naturalism and Religion* Otto had begun to stress a sense of the mysterious as characteristic of religion).

Classical expressions of this numinous feeling abound, it is pointed out, in the scriptures of religion, as for example: "Behold, I have taken upon me to speak to the Lord, who am but dust and ashes." "Put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground." "Surely the Lord is in this place and I knew it not. How dreadful is this place! This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven." "Behold, I am of small account; what shall I answer thee? I had heard of thee by the hearing of the ear; but now mine eye seeth thee; wherefore I abhor myself and repent in dust and ashes." "Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory." "Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips; for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts." "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord!" These are all expressions of the specifically religious, the numinous consciousness, the divinatory intuition of the holy, the "Wholly Other" (*The Idea of the Holy; Religious Essays*).

In criticism of this view we must start back with the Kantian epistemological dualism. Because of the assumption that the Divine, as independently existing reality, must be *wholly other*, existentially, from every perceptible thing or person and from every experienceable content, the Divine comes to be thought of, logically enough, as unknowable, "wholly other" qualitatively as well as existentially. It can be defined, then, only in negative terms, and it tends to become an object of ignorant and superstitious dread, divested of all rationality and all ideal spiritual qualities. The non-rational or extra-rational side of religion tends to be exaggerated into seeming to be its entire positive essence; religion and its specific object become alike irrational, arbitrary, of dubious spiritual value.

If, however, not epistemological dualism but a reasonably critical, direct or monistic realism be presupposed, the divine may be apprehended, not as the wholly transcendent and the wholly other, but as the transcendent but also partly immanent, or revealed, divinely functioning reality, worthy as such of our absolute devotion and worship. Thus the holy, or specifically religious quality and object, has as its *primary* qualities the attributes of ideal personality, while, in so far as it is identified, in knowledge or faith, with the subject of our ultimate dependence, as well as with the being intuited as standing back of the moral law, it also has what we may think of as its *secondary* quality, more subjective and less universal than the absolute values of the spiritual ideal, namely, the quality of numinousness. From this point of view, what we can speak of more appropriately than of the "irrational apriori of religion" is *empirical religious*

*intuition*—imaginal intuition in considerable part, but to some extent perceptual religious intuition as well. And instead of a purely negative abstraction as the object of rational religious faith, we may hope to have, from the point of view of a non-dualistic, non-agnostic realism, a reasonably tenable, positive concept of a God whom we can worship and trust. This is by way of anticipation of the content of our two concluding chapters; but for the present we would insist that it is high time for the dead hand of Kantian dualistic epistemology to be removed from the bowed head of German theology.\*

In the later phase of Otto's thought we witness, in a religious thinker fundamentally classifiable as a rather extreme critical rationalist, the beginning of a reaction in the direction of a reactionary irrationalism, such as we find typically expressed in the earlier phase of the Barthian theology. With this and other forms of reactionary irrationalism in recent and contemporary theology we shall deal in another chapter (Ch. XIX. In general, there is a close relation between Paul Tillich's views and those of Otto. Tillich's position might almost as appropriately have been considered under critical rationalism as in the strange company of the reactionaries with whom, because of his irrationalistic tendency, I have associated him).

\* For a discussion of Otto perhaps somewhat more sympathetic than my own I would ask the interested reader to watch for the publication of a work by Professor Robert F. Davidson, based upon his doctoral dissertation, "Rudolf Otto's Interpretation of Religion," deposited in the Yale University Library in 1937.

## Chapter XVIII

### RELIGIOUS PRAGMATISM

---

We now turn to a consideration of religious pragmatism, especially as a proposed way of overcoming or at least mitigating the agnosticism which has seemed thus far to be the logically inevitable consequence of a dualistic religious epistemology. There is perhaps no subject in contemporary philosophy of religion, discussions of which have been more continuously enveloped in fog than this whole matter of the meaning of pragmatism and the question as to whether it is valid or not, especially in its application to religion. Manifestly a considerable part of the problem of the present chapter must consist in an attempt to clear up to some extent the meaning, or principal meanings, of the term itself as it has been used in philosophical and theological discussion since the beginning of the century. Let us hope that the result will not be confusion worse confounded.

Before taking up the views of individual authors, I venture to suggest some distinctions in the meaning and use of terms which may possibly serve to clarify what is to be said in this present chapter, if no more. Let us begin by defining the essential minimum of pragmatism as the view that the test of truth of judgments about reality is always ultimately practical. One-sided essential pragmatism would then be the view that this test in practice is the proper test of the trueness of judgments. Essential intuitionism would be correspondingly defined as finding the criterion of truth in immediate experience, and essential intellectualism as finding it in a unique perceptual or theoretical consciousness of identity or correspondence between idea and reality, rather than in either practical consequences or immediate experience. One-sided intellectualism, one-sided intuitionism, and one-sided pragmatism may each perhaps need to be supplemented and thus corrected in a synthetic or synoptic view which would include the truth of all three views. (Cf. D. C. Macintosh, *Religious Realism*, 1931, pp. 329-333; W. Savery, *Philosophical Review*, July, 1938). The feasibility of this may be more apparent if in the definition the theoretical or intellectual criterion be made the fundamental meaning or proximate genus of truth, the pragmatic test the primary

criterion of the identity or correspondence, and the intuitional test by immediate experience the criterion of that criterion. This would yield the following definition: Truth is an identity or correspondence of idea with reality, or of predicate with subject, whose sufficiency for all valid practical purposes requiring a choice between the judgment in question and its contradictory, is guaranteed by the confirmation of immediate experience. It will be seen that what has been called intuitionism is meant to include immediate perceptual as well as imaginal intuition, and, we may add, while imaginal intuition may offer itself as a candidate for recognition as the ultimate test of the sufficiency of representation (of reality by idea), it is only perceptual intuition, the immediate experience of what is tentatively supposed in the working hypothesis, that can be taken as complete confirmation or verification, and this is possible with reference to independently existing reality, of course, only on the basis of a direct, immediate, or monistic realism. For dualism there can be no direct perception of independent reality.

Thus it would seem that essential pragmatism is an element, but an element only, in an adequate definition of the meaning of truth. In other words, the working which amounts to proof of truth is the working of a working hypothesis unto verification. The truth of pragmatism, like the truth of intellectualism and the truth of intuitionism, is to be found in scientific method. And so, as E. E. Slosson once remarked (*The Independent*, Feb. 21, 1907), "If pragmatism is old, it is obvious." He also added, "If it is new, it is nonsense." Whether this latter statement is true or not, remains to be seen.

In the recent and current literature of pragmatism are to be found statements of positions which either approach but fall short of what we have called essential pragmatism, or on the other hand go beyond it to a more extreme position. Under the former we would include such statements as that the practical working value of ideas may justify their being used as if they were true, even when they are seen not to be strictly true (Cf. *Vaihinger, et al.*), or that what does not work in practice is surely not true, even if what is found to work well for particular purposes is not to be regarded as therefore necessarily true (Cf. W. E. Hocking, *The Meaning of God in Human Experience*, p. xiii), or that practical consequences are valid as a test of the meaning of concepts but not of the truth of judgments (C. S. Peirce, *Popular Science Monthly*, XII, pp. 286-302; *The Monist*, 1905, pp. 166, 481ff.). Among interpretations of pragmatic doctrine which, whether held by self-styled pragmatists or imputed to them by their critics, go beyond what we have called essential pragmatism, we may include the view that any working of ideas which satisfies any practical purpose is true for the time being and for the persons favorably concerned; also the view that the working of ideas is not only a test or

proper criterion, but in itself a sufficient definition of their truth. (For a fuller treatment, see my discussion in *The Problem of Knowledge*, Ch. XVIII.)

Turning to a consideration of the application of pragmatism to religion, we find that there are two opposite extremes in the use made of the pragmatic principle, and between these a number of mutually similar but perhaps distinguishable positions. Of religious pragmatisms there are many, the explanation being that "the religion of a pragmatist is the result of many conditions, one and only one of which is his pragmatism" (Anna Louisa Strong, "Some Religious Aspects of Pragmatism," *American Journal of Theology*, XII, 1908, p. 240). At the extreme Left is the radical religious pragmatism which, while denying, for instance, that there exists an independent reality corresponding to the God-idea, would still maintain that the God-idea is God, the only God there is, and that the practical value of this God-idea (or God) justifies religion in using the idea as a practical guide and thus at the same time in regarding it as true (i.e. in the pragmatist, not in the intellectualist sense). At the extreme Right is reactionary religious pragmatism, offering as a supposedly adequate apologetic for the truth (in the intellectualist sense) of a whole traditional theological system the argument that its doctrines are instrumental to a religion which is instrumental to a morality which makes for human well-being. For instance, pragmatism has sometimes been used in defense of Roman Catholicism or of the traditional Protestant orthodoxy as a whole. This is to commit the "fallacy of composition"; it does not follow, because some element in a whole has practical value, that everything in the whole has such practical value as will suffice as a criterion of truth.

Between these radical and reactionary extremes room may be found for a number of different points of view and procedures, approaching more or less closely to an application of what we have called essential pragmatism, even if they either do not formally endorse or else definitely repudiate current pragmatism as they understand it. Some of these positions we have examined at some length already, notably the argument from the validity of values to the existence of God (Chapter XIII), the doctrine that theology is made up of religious value-judgments (Chapter XV), and the doctrine that, while consisting of existential judgments, religious judgments find their true basis in judgments of value (Chapter XVI). All such positions find in practical value, or at any rate in such value for life as is distinguishable from theoretical or logical value, an indication of truth. Whatever may be true as to the truth-value (i.e. value for guidance toward true belief, especially in theology and metaphysics) involved in critically established moral and other spiritual values, what we seemed to find, in the three chapters indicated, was that neither the validity of abstract ideals nor the value of experienced phenomenal

reality was sufficient, from a dualistic point of view, to overcome theoretical agnosticism and make logically possible a knowledge, strictly speaking, of unexperienced, forever transcendent reality.

The distinction just referred to, namely that between strict verification resulting in essentially scientific knowledge, and possible indication of the direction in which true religious and metaphysical belief may be found, may serve to define the two principal questions to be kept in mind as we review the thought of some of the confessed religious pragmatists of recent decades. If a dualistic religious epistemology be assumed, to what extent can a pragmatic conception of truth, in so far as it may be found tenable, serve to overcome or counteract the agnosticism supposedly implied in the dualism, so as to make genuine knowledge of independent reality humanly accessible? And whatever be the answer to that question, what can we learn from a critical religious pragmatism that may be made to serve us in constructing a system of reasonable religious belief, by which we may supplement whatever may be possible in the way of religious knowledge? Is there, then, a reasonably tenable religious pragmatism? Does it make religious knowledge possible? May it be properly used as a criterion of a reasonably acceptable faith?

We turn now to the more typical religious pragmatists, those who not only emphasize the practical criterion of truth but in some instances tend to define truth in terms of practice and utility of ideas, yet who stand between the radical and the reactionary extremes when they apply their pragmatism in an argument for the essential truth of religion. Here the great name is, of course, William James; but before considering his views we must give some attention to the writings of A. J. (Earl) Balfour, by whom James seems to have been influenced. Defining philosophy as a critical study of the grounds of belief, Balfour maintains that even with reference to the most fundamental results of scientific induction there are grounds for philosophic doubt. All that can be done is to show that certain laws are probable (*A Defence of Philosophic Doubt*, Hodder & Stoughton, 1879, pp. 2, 8, 34). So far as the law of universal causation is concerned, unless we first believe in the law we can have no reason for believing in the observations upon which it is supposed to be based (*Ibid.*, p. 71). Even the fact that a certain scientific theory works in practice is ground for believing it to be true or approximately true, only on the assumption of the truth of those broader generalizations which are themselves assumed on the basis of working hypotheses such as the one we are trying to prove (*Ibid.*, pp. 145, 146). Our natural convictions may be right, but the fact that the senses sometimes deceive us casts suspicion over all their testimony; proof of the correctness of our natural beliefs is called for, and where proof is necessary, scepticism is possible (*Ibid.*,

pp. 82, 84). And then when we try to form opinions only according to evidence, what we can regard as evidence is settled for us in advance by causes over which we have no control (*Ibid.*, p. 261). In short, there are no ultimately adequate *reasons* for our beliefs, but only adequate causes (*Ibid.*, p. 260), and this is conspicuously true of those of our beliefs which are most fundamental (*Ibid.*, p. 263; cf. *Foundations of Belief*, Longmans, 1895, p. 356).

But all this is not intended as an argument for universal disbelief. On the contrary, it is animated by the desire to furnish an apology for religious belief, in view of conditions which, it is felt, make religious knowledge impossible. General unbelief is hardly a possible state of mind, and the creeds of religion and of science stand on a perfect equality, so far as their philosophic value is concerned (*A Defence of Philosophic Doubt*, pp. 301, 303, 319). The logic of religious faith is identical with that of scientific belief. There is a presumption in favor of those religious beliefs which have moral value, only on the basis of the assumption of the moral governance of the universe; but this hypothesis itself can be verified only if the morally valuable religious beliefs are true (*Foundations of Belief*, p. 342). But even if in both science and religion we are denied not only demonstrative certainty, but also, critically speaking, philosophical probability as well, this is not to be taken to mean that we may not obtain, in both science and religion, the practical certainty which is all we require to guide us in the affairs of life (*A Defence of Philosophic Doubt*, pp. 34, 322). Many of us feel a practical need for religion as well as for science, and in both cases we believe in our creed *merely* because of a subjective need for it (*Ibid.*, pp. 320-321).

In his later work Balfour recommends that attitude of mind which will reject the non-religious or naturalistic view of the world on the ground that such a creed would inevitably in the end degrade our conception of life (*Foundations of Relief*, pp. 77, 81). In developing this advice he calls attention to the fact that Certitude is the child, not of Reason, but of Custom; that we are less perplexed about beliefs on which we are hourly called upon to act, because we are less inclined to ask questions about them (*Ibid.*, p. 164). Indeed, Authority, meaning by that term the non-rational but psychic causes of belief, is a continuous and unnoticed, but on the whole beneficent, and therefore proper influence in moulding our beliefs, religious and other (*Ibid.*, pp. 219, 228-229). In accepting science, as we all do, we are moved by "values," not by logic; but if values are to be taken into account, we might as well include the values of theistic religion, and even of Christianity, and construct or retain our beliefs accordingly (*Ibid.*, pp. 334-343; "Creative Evolution and Philosophic Doubt," *Hibbert Journal*, X, 1911, pp. 5, 21-23).

Against this point of view there are certain obvious criticisms. The



whole treatment savors of obscurantism. The word "authority," as a designation for non-rational psychic causes of belief, is used advisedly. Balfour's philosophy is a methodology, not of truth but of conservatism. The right of individual criticism is held to be undoubted, but dangerous; "it can only be safely enjoyed on condition that too many persons do not take it into their heads to exercise it together" (*Foundations of Belief*, pp. 215-216). But, we would remark, what is true of individual critical reason in this regard is even more obviously true of the exercise of non-rational "authority." Balfour himself recognizes that the argument from value to fact, when used by someone besides himself, is full of danger, and "must be used with caution" (*Ibid.*, p. 342). One is reminded of the ex-pragmatist's remark quoted by Vernon Lee: "Pragmatism could be a splendid thing, if only one could monopolize it for oneself" (*Vital Lies*, J. Lane, 1912, I, p. 158). Either that (Balfour, as a man accustomed to wield political power, might be expected to agree) or as an alternative, a fortunate selection of the authority whose non-rational motives for belief are to be allowed to prevail. The religious pragmatism of Balfour, to be understood, must be viewed against the background of his anti-intellectualistic and almost irrationalistic scepticism, which, in turn, may be viewed as the extension and outcome, in part at least, of the logically agnostic, dualistic turn naturally given by the religious believer to the phenomenalistic empiricism of Mill and others of the English school.

There seems reason to believe that William James's reading of Balfour influenced him in the construction of his doctrine of "the will to believe," and thus also in the later formal development of his religious pragmatism. "The Will to Believe" was first published in *The New World* for June, 1896; but this was after it had been read by James before the Philosophical Clubs of Yale and Brown Universities, and before that, at Dr. Felix Adler's "Summer School of Ethics" in Plymouth, Mass., in the summer of 1895 (R. B. Perry, *The Thought and Character of William James*, Little, Brown, 1935, Vol. II, p. 208. Or was it at Northampton? Cf. Preface to Second Edition of *The Letters of William James*, Little, Brown, 1926). Now not more than three or four months before this, namely, on April 26, 1895, and probably before the essay had been written, William James wrote to his brother Henry as follows:

"I have been reading Balfour's *Foundations of Belief* with immense gusto. It almost makes me a Liberal-Unionist! If I mistake not it will have a profound effect eventually, and it is a pleasure to see old England coming to the fore every time with some big stroke. There is more real philosophy in such a book than in fifty German ones of which the eminence consists in heaping up subtleties and technicalities about the subject. The Eng-

lish genius makes the vitals plain by scuffing the technicalities away. Balfour is a great man" (*The Letters of William James*, Vol. II, p. 20).

The essay itself contains a reference to the special sense in which Balfour uses the term "authority" in *The Foundations of Belief* (*The Will to Believe, and Other Essays*, Longmans, Green, 1897, p. 9).

William James defends two points of view in religious epistemology, one for the mystic and the other for non-mystics, among whom, at least up to the time of his delivery of the Gifford Lectures, he seems to have been content to include himself. Late in life, possibly because of some more or less mystical experiences of his own, he acknowledged that there was in him a "mystical germ" (Perry, op. cit., Vol. II, pp. 351, 355, 676-677; cf. J. S. Bixler, *Religion in the Philosophy William James*, Marshall Jones, 1926, Ch. IX). But while mystical states are authoritative for those who have them, it is conceded that the same thing cannot be said with reference to the non-mystical outsider (*The Varieties of Religious Experience*, Longmans, Green, 1902, pp. 423-4, 427). The mystical point of view, as we have seen, is a very pronounced form of monistic epistemological realism in religion; but the non-mystical point of view, from which James wrote the *Varieties* and *The Will to Believe* and recommended judging Mysticism by its practical fruits, is a dualistic realism—or in James's case what amounts to the same thing, a pluralistic empiricism—according to which God may be real but is not presented within our *conscious* experience, whatever may be true of the subconscious. But for James the agnosticism logically associated with such a point of view is toned down considerably, not chiefly by his respect for the mystic's certitude, but by his pragmatism and his doctrine of the will to believe.

In the realm of religion, according to James, doubt is and always will be theoretically possible (*The Will to Believe*, pp. 90, 95). His famous essay on "The Will to Believe," however, was written to defend "the lawfulness of voluntarily adopted faith," "the right to adopt a believing attitude in religious matters, in spite of the fact that our merely logical intellect may not have been coerced" (*Ibid.*, pp. 1, 2). Defining an hypothesis as anything that may be proposed to our belief, he calls a live hypothesis one that appeals as a real possibility to him to whom it is proposed. The liveness of an hypothesis is measured by the willingness to act upon it. The decision between two hypotheses he calls an option. Options may be either living or dead, forced or avoidable, and momentous or trivial. A living option is one in which both hypotheses are live ones, and it is when the option is forced, living and momentous, that one has a right, according to James, voluntarily to adopt his working belief and abide by the consequences (*Ibid.*, pp. 2, 3, 11, 29, 90). Of such

a sort, he claims, is the religious question; to himself at any rate it presents a genuine option (*Ibid.*, pp. 29-30).

In an early essay ("The Sentiment of Rationality," 1879, 1880), republished in the volume, *The Will to Believe*, James makes bold to assert that even what we call "rationality" is only a name for unimpeded mental function. "Of two conceptions equally fit to satisfy the logical demand, that one which awakens the active impulses or satisfies other aesthetic demands better than the other, will be accounted the more rational conception" (*Ibid.*, pp. 63-64, 75-76). On the basis of this definition of rationality which accords so well with the will to believe, he declares that theism, since it appeals to all the energies of our active nature, is the most practically rational solution of the religious problem which it is possible to conceive (*Ibid.*, p. 127). The line of least resistance, both in theology and in philosophy he feels to be that of a belief in a divine but finite superhuman consciousness (*A Pluralistic Universe*, Longmans, Green, 1909, p. 311; *The Meaning of Truth*, *ibid.*, 1909, p. 125).

In estimating the value of mysticism from the standpoint of non-mystical common sense, James urges the view that historical religion in general and mystical religion in particular are justified by their fruits (*Varieties*, etc., pp. 15, 17, 237, 331, 377). Moreover, he assumes that this means that the theological ideas which inspire these practically valuable religious experiences are in some important sense accredited by this circumstance, although he admits that we cannot altogether escape further theoretical considerations (*Ibid.*, pp. 331, 377). In this same connection he says that if it should turn out that the mystic's experience cannot commend itself to common sense as practically valuable, the idea which inspired the experience will by that fact be discredited. This unfavorable judgment to the effect that what works badly cannot reasonably be taken as true is more defensible critically than the favorable decision that what works well is to be accepted as true, and may well for that reason have suggested to W. E. Hocking the tenability of "negative pragmatism" and the untenability of "positive pragmatism" (*The Meaning of God in Human Experience*, Yale Univ. Press, 1912, p. xiii).

To James himself, lacking the subjective certitude of the mystic, pragmatism commended itself as a method of deciding religious and metaphysical disputes that might otherwise be interminable; the pragmatist, though an empiricist, might nevertheless reasonably be a man of positive religious faith (*Pragmatism*, Longmans, Green, pp. 33, 45). Truth being defined as the practical value of ideas, if it can be shown that certain theological ideas have a value for life—and in James's opinion it surely can—they must be regarded as true in the sense that they are the ideas which it is better for us to believe than to reject. If the notion of God works satisfactorily in the widest sense of the word, it is what we ought

to believe, or in other words, it is true (*Ibid.*, pp. 58, 73, 76, 80, 273, 299). The will to believe the religious hypothesis may then, in the light of its practical value, be regarded as "the right to believe" (*Ibid.*, p. 258). It comes as the last step of a "faith-ladder," or "slope of good-will," the whole extent of which is as follows: It *might be* true under certain conditions, because it is not self-contradictory; it *may be* true here and now; it is *fit to be* true, i.e., it would be well if it were true; it *must be* true; it *shall be as if* it were true, at least for me (*A Pluralistic Universe*, p. 329; *Some Problems of Philosophy*, Longmans, Green, 1911, p. 224).

James's position here is reminiscent of "Pascal's wager," an argument which has become a commonplace of popular Christian apologetics. It is to the following effect: If I believe in God and immortality, and in Christian doctrine generally, even if it should turn out that I am mistaken, I shall in the end be none the worse off for my belief. If, however, I am right, I shall be infinitely better off for my belief. On the other hand, if I refuse to believe, and happen to be correct in so doing, in the end it will make no difference; while if I should be wrong in this refusal, I may be infinitely the loser by my disbelief. From this point of view, the will to believe is the infinitely better "wager." But apart from all questions as to eschatology, what the wager argument ignores is that ethically, logically, and psychologically, religious faith is not quite so simple a matter as that. It is very well to "bet one's life that there is a God" (to use Donald Hankey's famous phrase), if one can with full intellectual honesty do so; but we have no right to live as if there were a God, except so far as we honestly can, even for the sake of winning a promised subjective religious certitude. The will to believe becomes the right to believe, only when it has done justice to "the duty to doubt" (Cf. Dickinson S. Miller, *International Journal of Ethics*, IX, 1899). As for Pascal's wager, it was not rightly put, even from the medieval theological standpoint. From that point of view it should have read: If one would be wise, he will try to avoid hell and get to heaven, and so he will believe the doctrines of the Church, if he honestly and logically can, and will act accordingly. From a modern point of view the statement would be: We ought to believe in God and immortality if, logically and psychologically, as honest, well-informed thinkers, we find it possible to do so, and we ought to do this because of the moral and general spiritual value of the belief, primarily for our life here, but presumably also for the life hereafter.

The task of criticism may here seem more than usually ungracious, especially in view of what was probably the true opinion of one who, writing not as a mere philosopher but as a careful psychological student of religious belief as well, expressed the view that James's "Will to Believe" had been one of the greatest influences for genuine religious

faith that had appeared in half a century (J. B. Pratt, *What Is Pragmatism?* Macmillan, 1909, p. 194). But this might very well be true without the doctrine itself being a finally satisfactory theory of religious knowledge. It may have been, in a certain peculiar situation, pedagogically valuable without thereby having been shown to be in all respects philosophically valid. As a matter of fact it looks suspiciously like a convenient mental makeshift, something logically faulty purposely devised to prevent the unfortunate agnostic consequences otherwise flowing from the fundamental mistake of having originally accepted too easily an absolute dualism of a forever unexperienceably transcendent divine reality, on the one hand, and a never more than purely subjective religious experience on the part of man, on the other. If there is no revelation of God, actual or possible, within the field of man's direct experience and observation, the best that can be done for man religiously is to advise and urge him to believe, if he honestly can, in a divine being of whom he can never, in this life at least, gain any real knowledge.

Put more plainly, perhaps, our criticism is this. It is the fault of a dualistic religious epistemology that it posits, as inescapable, conditions which logically involve theoretical agnosticism as to divine reality. There being, from this point of view, no possible experiential access to God, no verifying experience of the divinely functioning reality promised in the hypothesis of faith, there is perhaps, apart from conversion to a more satisfactory religious epistemology, nothing better to do, from a practical point of view, than to commit the logical fault of taking the "feeling better" which comes from beginning to act upon the hypothesis of faith and the other desirable consequences of the same as if they were the progressive verification of the hypothesis, which, however, from the assumed dualistic premises they can never logically be. It is like taking postulation as if it were of itself verification. Postulates may be defensible where verification is impossible, but even there they should not be taken as if they were necessarily verified by the mere general fact of their usefulness. Moreover, it is too bad to be forced to live by postulates alone, and never to be able to claim, in the religious field, anything that can be defended as fully verified knowledge. What we need fundamentally, next to a certain religious experience itself, is such a theory of knowledge as will enable us to see that full verification of at least some religious hypotheses is, at some points at least, a genuine possibility, not only for some of us here and now, but, on certain conditions of religious adjustment, always, everywhere, and for all.

In one important passage (*Varieties of Religious Experience*, p. 456; cf. *Some Problems of Philosophy*, p. 231) James predicts the appearance

of a "critical Science of Religions"—a scientific empirical theology is what he really means—whereby what valid religious knowledge there may be in mystical revelation will be given the universal form of an empirical science. This suggestion is not developed, however, as it could not well be so long as the subjective certitudes of the mystics occupied the center of attention. As a whole James's own religious epistemology remains dualistic, and so, at bottom, agnostic. Had his own religious epistemology been a critical monistic realism instead of a dualism, possibly he might have found some elements of verified religious knowledge in some of the instances to which he refers, "where faith in a fact can help create the fact" (*The Will to Believe*, pp. 25, 59-62, 97); but no constructive theological use was made of such instances, and of course James was thinking chiefly of something less empirical and more transcendental when he was advocating the adoption of the religious hypothesis as an option which is live, forced, and momentous.

A further criticism of James's religious philosophy is that there is a good deal of confusion as to just *what* religious ideas ought to be believed on pragmatic grounds. This is what was to be expected where the possibility of verification was so inadequately exhibited, or even provided for. In one passage, for instance, with a certain air of bravado our pluralistic, radically empiricist philosopher makes the unexpected declaration that the belief in the Absolute is "true in so far forth" as it has the value of providing the right to take a moral holiday (*Pragmatism*, pp. 73-75); but later on he is constrained to retract the statement (*The Meaning of Truth*, Preface, pp. viii-x). Moreover, just because of this same failure to develop a satisfactory theory of verification, when he ventured to apply the designation "truth" to what it seems, for practical reasons, "better to believe," he puts, as Balfour also does in his own way, a dangerous weapon in the hands of the obscurantist. All too often the will to believe is, as one critic has said, the will to deceive one's self (D. S. Miller, *art. cit.*, p. 173), or, as another has facetiously expanded the expression, the will to make believe (W. M. Urban, *International Journal of Ethics*, XIX, pp. 212-213, 231). As already noted, much religious pragmatism expresses primarily "the will to make others believe" (Vernon Lee, *op. cit.*).

Dr. Eleanor H. Rowland, in a little book entitled *The Right to Believe* (Houghton Mifflin, 1909), presents in popular form and in almost too matter-of-fact a way, but still very effectively, especially for those who already do believe "in the bottom of their hearts," even while they doubt "with the top of their minds," the voluntaristic and pragmatic argument for a reasonable, comparatively simple, essentially Christian,

religious faith. Defining religion somewhat naively, but still with considerable accuracy from the standpoint of popular interest in "beliefs that matter," as "a belief in the existence of God, the authority of Christ as exponent of God's nature, the responsibility of man, the value of prayer, and the immortality of the soul" (*Op. cit.*, pp. 11, 12), her preliminary argument is that since religion gives more satisfaction than the lack of it, belief is the safer principle to adopt (*Ibid.*, p. 14). We can neither prove nor disprove the existence of God, it is claimed; in any case we must live by faith, positive or negative. Since we must choose our faith, then, it is better to choose a desirable faith, rather than an undesirable one (*Ibid.*, pp. 41-43).

We have, according to Dr. Rowland, "a right—other things being equal—to believe what we hope" (*Ibid.*, p. 55), and this applies not only to the existence of God, but to the nature of God as well. "We can be without hope, and without God in the world, if we choose" (*Ibid.*, p. 74), but when we are at what seems to be our best we choose to think of God as a superhuman personality who is supremely good, and who has caused a race of men to develop, because he desires the companionship of persons. It seems desirable, too, that we be able to think of God as not completely foreknowing the future or causing human actions, and of his being so related to us as to make possible some kind of communication between him and ourselves. Let us believe all that we hope about God, if we can (*Ibid.*, pp. 55-104). Similarly, in the judgment of this author, it seems desirable to think of God as having revealed himself in Christ; therefore, let us believe this also, if we can (*Ibid.*, pp. 105-139). The problem set by the fact of evil is not fatal, Dr. Rowland thinks, to this optimistic faith. If we are sufficiently critical and candid, we must admit that in the world we really have, in principle, what we want—a world of natural law and human freedom—"however badly the details work themselves out through man's misuse of freedom" (*Ibid.*, p. 166). And finally, we should believe in the efficacy of prayer, because we must either believe in it or its opposite, and we have the right to believe as we hope (*Ibid.*, p. 169).

With reference to this simple program one or two simple and obvious questions may be raised. If, as seems to be taught, and as would logically follow from the dualistic presupposition that experience of divine reality is beyond what can be reasonably expected, it will never be possible to transform any part of the recommended belief into verified knowledge, it then becomes a pertinent question whether, if it be granted that belief, where it is honestly possible, can be exercised as a right, there is not room also for the right, if not to disbelieve, at least to remain in a state of honest doubt, in spite of the "desirability" of belief. We are more conscious than we were thirty

years ago of the danger of false rationalizing and wishful thinking. But it would be too invidious to dismiss Miss Rowland's interesting argument as mere wishful thinking; what it recommends and exemplifies is hopeful thinking, straightforward and unabashed. And is it not better, generally speaking, to be hopeful, if one can, than to be pessimistic, hopeless, and discouraged?

However, the argument before us, suggestive and valuable as it is, seems a bit uncritical. After all, religious faith is perhaps more a matter of intuition than of arbitrary will. And intuition is not infallible; it is not morally wrong to examine it critically. In the present situation it is not inappropriate for the person of religious inclinations to examine honestly both the traditional religious teaching and his own intuitional faith, in so far as he has it, to see whether the beliefs in question are theoretically permissible in the light of modern knowledge. If and in so far as they are found to be so, and in proportion to their positive value for life, there is a place for the exercise of will in affirming or reaffirming the intuitional faith, and beginning or continuing to act accordingly. We may reasonably do this if we can, and in the end we can if we go the right way about it. The right way is to keep acting decisively upon whatever positive religious faith we already have. Because of the moral value of religious faith at its best, there is imposed upon those who recognize this the duty of trying to find a way of honestly believing the vital fundamentals of religion, and furthermore of doing what is needed to transform into verified knowledge as much of the content of this faith as can be thus transformed. On the expert authority of those who "have believed and do know" (through the resulting experience) not only that God, a divinely functioning reality, is, but also to some extent what he is, others may well be exhorted to "believe in order to know," through similar religious experience, and it may be very defensibly maintained that they have the right so to do, if they will and find that they honestly can.

The late Dr. F. C. S. Schiller maintained, in an article published first in the *Hibbert Journal* and later in *Studies in Humanism* (Macmillan, 1907, Ch. XVI), that pragmatism had done away with the extreme opposition of faith and reason by showing the former to be an essential ingredient in the very constitution of the latter ("Faith, Reason, and Religion," *Hibbert Journal*, IV, 1906, pp. 332, 335-336). In this article he points out that pragmatism is just as good a support of the will to disbelieve as of the will to believe (*Ibid.*, p. 333). In fact the pragmatic test is a severe one, balancing the widest liberty to experiment with the demand for verification in the shape of actual achievements of practical value (*Ibid.*, pp. 336-337). Now religion, Schiller



contends, is able to meet this test as well as science. It also works, even if its results are spiritual rather than material (*Ibid.*, p. 338). Not all religious interpretations are true, but the same is to be said of scientific theories (*Ibid.*, p. 339). Both science and religion start from unproved assumptions, postulates of faith, which can be verified only after they have been trusted (*Ibid.*, p. 340). Modern thought is unfair in that it is more severe on religion than on science (*Ibid.*, p. 341). This is largely due to the greater difficulty of scientific investigation in the spiritual sphere, and to the greater vagueness of religious ideas, for example, the idea of God. But these difficulties and disadvantages can be overcome, if theologians will only adopt more rigidly scientific methods of investigation (*Ibid.*, pp. 343-344).

In general, this may be said to be a finger-post pointing in the right direction, rather than a guide who accompanies the theologian on his empirical way. There is one serious defect in the discussion. The concept of verification is left indefinite; no provision is made for crucial experiments such as might be expected to result in either the verification or the disproof of elements in the faith under investigation.

In an early work entitled *Truth and Reality*, J. E. Boodin classifies himself as a "pragmatic realist," that is, a realist within the limits of a fundamental pragmatism, in distinction from a realistic pragmatist, i.e. a pragmatist within the limits of fundamental realism, such as W. P. Montague at one time made himself out to be (*Journal of Philosophy*, VI, 1909, pp. 460ff., 485ff., 543ff., 561ff.). If we can successfully act *as if* a certain faith were real, our faith, he claims, "crystallizes into being and ceases to be mere faith, or subjective attitude" (*Truth and Reality*, Macmillan, 1911, p. 316). He would apply the same criterion in testing the reality of the religious environment. The idea of God is proved by its fitness to satisfy the needs of the individual, or at any rate of the race in its progressive evolution. The intuitive certitude of instinctive religious feeling must be corrected in the light of further experience. The ultimate question is whether man must act *as if* the religious environment were real, in order to attain to his highest development. In religion as in science, the fittest beliefs tend to survive; the test of the truth of the hypothesis is to be found in its working (*Ibid.*, pp. 316, 320-321). Moreover, the same criterion which shows us *that* God is, shows us also *what* he is. Unity, goodness, personality, have proved themselves characters indispensable to the efficiency of the God-idea. That is the truest idea of God which can furnish the fullest satisfaction of the demands and longings of developing humanity (*Ibid.*, pp. 323-325).

The difficulties here are mainly two. In the first place, how can one be a *bona fide* realist if reality is for him a mere functional distinction

within a whole of experience, viewed after the manner of a functional psychologism or radical empiricism? It is no doubt significant, as indicating the instability of such a position, that in later works Boodin's pragmatism is less and less in evidence (*A Realistic Universe*, Macmillan, 1916; *Cosmic Evolution*, *ibid.*, 1925), until finally it seems to have evaporated altogether (*Three Interpretations of the Universe*, Macmillan, 1934; *God*, *ibid.*, 1934).<sup>\*</sup> In the second place, the underlying dualism of Boodin's religious epistemology is obscured but not really overcome by the way in which his so-called "realism" is built up within the same functional psychologism, according to which there are no independent reals (*Truth and Reality*, p. 252), so that to ask what perceptual qualities are when they are not perceived is "as superfluous as it is meaningless" (*Ibid.*, p. 263). Boodin speaks as if to be able psychologically to continue to think of God as real, despite all changes of experience, were the same thing as to prove his reality, or even to cause him to become real. But to think of God as real and to cause him thus to become or to remain real could be so only from the point of view of a religious subjectivism amounting to atheism. This is not what Boodin means, even in the early work we have considered here; but this is what he does not clearly show there how to avoid. Much later, in his *Hibbert Journal* article entitled "God" (July, 1929) and in his book with the same title, he has shown us by example that the true way of escape from such relativism is not first to get into it and then struggle to get out, but rather to avoid getting into it in the first instance.

A. K. Rogers was "exposed" to instrumentalist pragmatism during his course of graduate study at the University of Chicago, but as in some other cases it "didn't take," at least not very well. However, some marks of pragmatism were left upon his thought. In an early work (*The Religious Conception of the World*, Macmillan, 1907) he appeals to value and working as tests of truth, even though he finds the primary basis for affirmations of religious faith in feeling rather than in considerations of practical need and value. Emotional demands lie at the basis of even our most ordinary convictions, it is held. The belief in other selves we refuse to give up, primarily because it would take away too much from the worth of our experience; and we hold on to our belief in a physical world, because without such a belief, belief in other selves could not be maintained (*Op. cit.*, pp. 28, 31, 32). We can rest satisfied with no philosophy which ignores the demands of feeling, and a solution

<sup>\*</sup> Professor Boodin now seems to regard himself as both a realist and an idealist. He was one of the co-authors of *Religious Realism* (edited by D. C. Macintosh) in 1931, and one of the co-authors of *Contemporary Idealism in America* (edited by C. Barrett) in 1932.

of the problem of religious knowledge is not to be undertaken apart from dependence upon religious feeling (*Ibid.*, pp. 61-63, 78).

But appeal is also made to practice and the working value of ideas. Religion serves a genuine human interest, and for this reason a world-view constructed to meet religious needs is better accredited than one which rests upon mere logically consistent speculation on the part of the average individual thinker (*Ibid.*, pp. 85, 87, 92). It is only a sense of practical need that impels anyone to seek to overcome agnosticism (*Ibid.*, p. 106). We have no right to believe everything to which we feel inclined; our postulates must work in the light of experience. Our religious faith must be verified in the sense of making life gradually more settled, harmonious and self-justifying. Mere present satisfactoriness of feeling is no ultimate test. The religious conception of the world must be shown to be not incompatible with other humanly necessary postulates. Rationality is a proper test, but as applied to a world-view the term means harmony among the emotionally originated and practically tested postulates (*Ibid.*, pp. 37, 71, 74, 76-78, 107).

In all this Rogers is an epistemological dualist, for whom the existence of an encircling extra-experiential reality and the possibility of knowing it progressively are "prejudices," in which, however, we do well to persist (*Ibid.*, pp. 34, 39-40). "The correspondence of our thought with reality always remains a postulate, an act of faith" (*Journal of Philosophy*, I, 1904, p. 212). Strictly speaking, then, verification of theories about reality in direct experience is an impossibility.

Moreover, even as an emotionally originated intuition, criticized from practical points of view, Rogers' "religious conception of the world" leaves much to be desired. Utilizing a relic of his former idealism, the material universe is regarded by him as completely predetermined, but as existing only in the consciousness of God, a power "on which depends such part of the attainment of the valuable ends of life as we feel lies outside the scope of our own unaided powers" (*Religious Conception of the World*, pp. 81, 124-125, 132-133, 139, 140). Finite selves are dependent on the material universe and the material universe in turn upon God, so that it is not in the realm of man's spiritual life, not even in his religious experience, that contact with the divine is to be looked for, but only in a mechanically predetermined physical universe. In fact, in the interest of man's independence, instead of Leibniz's divinely *pre-established* harmony Rogers postulates a pre-existent harmony (*Ibid.*, pp. 155-156, 162-163, 170, 174-175, 184, 191). God remains an unverified hypothesis (*Ibid.*, p. 124), and, even at that, what his existence means for man seems not to be distinguishable, *practically*, from what is to be expected of the mechanical processes of the natural world, belief in even the existence of which remains a "prejudice." From the point of view

of emotion and sentiment, however, belief in God and the religious conception of the world are preferable to atheistic materialism or even an unrelieved agnosticism.

In a later treatment of the religious problem, Rogers admits that, "even apart from the insistent facts of suffering and evil, the world of nature in the concrete presents to our natural mind a brute and non-moral character, which we shall probably hesitate to connect too closely with the notion of God in its religious meaning" (*What is Truth?* Yale Univ. Press, 1923, p. 181). Later still, he was content, apparently, to argue *objectively* only for the human importance of religion. Subjectively, however, "man's proneness to believe that somehow, though it may be he is quite unable to say how, natural forces are on the side of reason and the sentiments which social reason presupposes" may lead him to cling to this attenuated form of religion as a support of the hope that his work for human betterment "will not go for nothing" ("Is Religion Important?" in *Religious Realism*, pp. 3-32).

In his essay on "The Influence of Pragmatism upon the Status of Theology" (*Studies in Philosophy and Psychology: Garman Commemoration Volume*, Houghton Mifflin, 1906), E. W. Lyman maintains that when, through a reform in the methods of theology and the empirical sciences both will have become pragmatic rather than dogmatic (Cf. Dewey's brochure *Logical Conditions of a Scientific Treatment of Morality*, Univ. of Chicago Press, 1903), theology will have become one of the empirical sciences (*Op. cit.*, pp. 226-227). Pragmatism, he claims, does away with the dualism of faith and theoretical knowledge by showing that faith enters to some degree into all our knowledge (*Theology and Human Problems*, Scribners, 1910, p. 51). In general, customary thought appears rational, but emotional interests and active faith must also be recognized as factors of rationality, especially the ethico-religious faith which adopts such beliefs as are required by the moral consciousness ("Influence of Pragmatism," p. 228; *Theology and Human Problems*, p. 83). Natural laws, formulated under the guidance of intellectual needs, must not be allowed to veto the world-view dictated by our moral and religious needs (*Theology and Human Problems*, p. 123). And so, it is argued, ethical monotheism is verifiable, according to the principles of religious pragmatism (*Ibid.*, pp. 136-150).

Here again we note the same difficulty we have seen in connection with other pragmatist writers, with reference to just what it is that constitutes verification. What Lyman's language suggests is a levelling of the recognized sciences down, methodologically speaking, almost to the level of theological dogmatics, instead of that levelling up to the level of realistic empirical science which, in so far as it may be feasible, is a

consummation so devoutly to be wished. Verification of religious hypotheses seems to be an ideal never fully to be realized by means of the method recommended by Lyman, even when the idea "works," as he points out, "from the standpoint of society," "on the whole," and "in the long run" (*Ibid.*, p. 47). There is no full verification here, but at best only an increase of probability that the general hypothesis is true. If theology is to become truly scientific in the empirical sense, it must learn to "divide and conquer." It must deduce minor hypotheses from major hypotheses, until it arrives at hypothetical propositions capable of being verified in crucial experiments involving direct, first-hand experience of the reality in question.

In his latest and most important work (*The Meaning and Truth of Religion*, Scribners, 1933), Professor Lyman himself undertakes to call the more radical pragmatists to task, as being about as dangerously one-sided as the rationalists and the mystics. The "most serious weakness" of current pragmatism, however, he finds in its "making relativity to desire and interest the controlling thing in determining truth and value," thus losing sight of the fact that "there are basic truths and values which are objectively valid, whether they are subjectively desired by individuals and communities or not" (*Op. cit.*, pp. 190, 192). This is sound criticism; but when Lyman himself in his later writings makes his appeal fundamentally to intuition, instead of to practical value, he leaves his position open, as we have seen, to the charge of insufficiently distinguishing from merely imaginal intuition, or intuition in general, that particular perceptual form of intuition which can discharge the function of verification.

Writing under the immediate influence of William James's *Pragmatism, a New Name for Some Old Ways of Thinking*, E. A. Cook put out a pamphlet in 1909 entitled *Christian Pragmatism, a New Name for Some Old Ways of Believing*. The "fundamental principle" of this pragmatism is enunciated as follows: "We will believe and teach that to be true, belief in which would be most helpful to the development and maintenance of the religious life." Or, more briefly, "That is true which helps one to become good, and true in so far as it helps toward goodness, and no farther" (*Op. cit.*, pp. 2, 3). To guard against arbitrariness it is conceded that "no one ought to believe anything which he cannot believe" (*Ibid.*, p. 4). Christian pragmatists believe in God because it helps them to be brave and faithful to duty (*Ibid.*, p. 8). Speaking for the pragmatist, Dr. Cook makes the declaration, "Show how your doctrines will make men better and happier, and I will accept them" (*Ibid.*, p. 10).

The same position is taken in this same author's book, published in

1913 under the title, *Christian Faith for Men of Today* (Univ. of Chicago Press). There it is maintained that the best religion is that "which is of the greatest assistance to the individual in the development and enjoyment of all his powers," and "which has the strongest tendency to make men helpful to each other" (*Op. cit.*, p. 4). This, no doubt, is a better definition of the best religion than Professor T. N. Carver's, in *The Religion Worth Having* (Houghton Mifflin, 1912), which defines it as that one which "acts most powerfully as a spur to energy and directs that energy most productively," that is, the one "which supports the most life and supports it most abundantly, which gives the largest control over the forces of nature and the most complete dominion over the world, and which enables men to control whatever environment happens to surround them and to live comfortably in it" (*Op. cit.*, p. 13, *et passim*). This primarily economic valuation of religion ignores the higher spiritual values. Dr. Cook's definition does not do that, but it does treat very cavalierly the intellectual values of truth and rationality. Can it be stated universally, as Cook states it, that social value, "power to make men righteous," is a guaranty of the truth of a religious faith (*Christian Faith for Men of Today*, p. 33)? This device whereby the Gordian knot of theological truth is cut instead of being painstakingly untied may be for the moment the easiest way out of difficulty, but it may prove very destructive of both truth and certainty in the end.

The present writer never capitulated completely to the pragmatism which dominated certain philosophical and religious circles in America a generation ago, but for a time I was decidedly under its influence. I defended an affirmative answer to the question, Can pragmatism furnish a philosophical basis for theology? (*Harvard Theological Review*, Jan., 1910), and wrote an article emphasizing the pragmatic element in the teaching of Paul (*American Journal of Theology*, July, 1910). My pragmatism, such as it was, however, was, or soon came to be, realistic and representational, insistent upon the need and possibility of metaphysics, and undertaking to be a synthesis of intellectualism and current pragmatism (*The Reaction against Metaphysics in Theology*, 1911; "Representational Pragmatism," *Mind*, April, 1912; *The Problem of Knowledge*, 1915, Ch. XIX). On this basis I developed my pragmatism, general and religious, in the conservative direction which tended to insist that the kind of working which could be taken as an adequate test of truth was the working of a working hypothesis unto verification in immediate experience of the reality judged about. In the religious realm this led to the thesis that to an appreciable extent religious faith may become verified knowledge, and to the same extent theology may become an empirical science (*Theology as an Empirical Science*, Mac-

millan, 1919; cf. Chapter XII *supra*). This was virtually to cut loose from religious pragmatism, as the term was currently understood.

It was easily seen, however, that not all the important doctrinal content of theology could be set forth as fully verified in religious experience, even at its best. There was much that could not be expected to attain to a higher status, epistemologically and logically, than that of reasonable faith. How then was this faith-element to be made to be, and shown to be, really reasonable? Internal consistency and compatibility with known facts and critically established values were the standard tests of reasonableness in religious faith. In *The Reasonableness of Christianity* (Scribners, 1925), I developed an argument, faintly reminiscent of religious pragmatism, defending the logical converse of the proposition that the person of essentially Christian faith must logically be an optimist within the limits set by a full recognition of man's freedom and moral responsibility. No attempt was made to *demonstrate* the fallacious *simple* converse proposition, that if one were already a moral optimist he must logically be a Christian theist. What was attempted was rather to show the permissibility and reasonableness of Christian theism for the moral optimist. The normality of moral optimism for the conscientious will and healthy mind, and its greater spiritual and especially moral value, in comparison with both pessimism and extreme, uncritical optimism, and even as against mere meliorism, making it morally imperative if theoretically permissible and psychologically possible, were used as a cumulative argument for voluntarily affirming or reaffirming an originally intuitionist surmise or faith, on condition of its successfully standing all fair tests as to its theoretical permissibility. The argument was addressed to the outsider, but, like most apologetic efforts, it was more convincing to the already half-convinced, those in whose hearts and minds there was already at least the beginning of an essentially Christian religious faith, than to the sceptical or pessimistic outsider. (A critical and appreciative discussion of the will-to-believe idea is to be found in my Calcutta lectures, *The Pilgrimage of Faith*, Univ. of Calcutta Press, 1931, Ch. III).

Henri Bois, French Protestant theologian, in a work entitled *La Valeur de l'expérience religieuse* (1908), entered upon a course of thought which, but for an underlying epistemological dualism, might have led to fruitful results for a scientifically empirical rather than a merely pragmatic theology. He asserts that religious experience has value for theological knowledge, just as sense-experience has value for scientific knowledge. In both regions experimental knowledge is possible, he claims, however difficult it may be to gain it in the realm of religion (*Op. cit.*, pp. 14-17, 85). There are religious perceptions—perceptions of

an independent religious reality—which, like sensible perceptions, are distinguishable from hallucinations (*Ibid.*, pp. 43-46).

The effect of these contentions is largely spoiled, however, by the dualistic view which is taken of perception, both sensible and religious. In no experience, it is conceded to the dualist, is there any direct apprehension of independent reality. As in scientific experience the external world is apprehended only through metaphysical induction, or faith, so it is with the apprehension of God in religious experience (*Ibid.*, pp. 24, 42, 46, 48). For this reason, doubt and denial are always theoretically possible (*Ibid.*, pp. 49-50, 61-62, 88). Practically, however, it is necessary to believe in the independent reality of God (*Ibid.*, p. 51), and the Christian of deep religious experience finds it practically impossible to doubt the actual intervention of God in his life. But instead of saying that the Christian believes that he feels or experiences the presence and action of God in his life, one ought to say, according to Bois, that he feels or experiences the fact that he believes in this divine presence and action. The irresistibility of the belief is not pathological, but thoroughly normal, and so is to be taken as an indication of its truth (*Ibid.*, pp. 88, 97, 102-103).

In other words, instead of what we have called religious perception, or perceptual intuition, religious experience yields, according to Bois, only what we have called imaginal intuition. Instead of immediate certainty of an experienced divine process and divinely functioning reality, all we have, in the judgment of Bois, is an immediate subjective certitude of a transcendent reality not experienced by us. Of course the latter can yield only faith, however assured, and not verified knowledge. The (alleged) impossibility of a direct experience of the divine is explained by Bois as due to the fact that God's direct action upon man is only in the subconscious realm of his life (*Ibid.*, p. 114). In the nature of the case, therefore, until belief in the intervention of God has become irresistible, it must be supported by the pragmatic argument; the tree is to be judged by its fruits. Because of the moral value of the belief one may say, "I will to believe that my religious experiences come from the personal and free God. Even though I cannot show or prove that they have a supernatural origin, I will live as if that were true; I will believe that it is true, because the life which follows from this confidence is morally well worth living" (*Ibid.*, p. 134).

It should not be necessary to repeat here the criticisms already made against the conclusiveness of the loose argumentation of current religious pragmatism, especially when associated with a dualistic theory of knowledge. Favorable notice may, however, be taken of Bois's recognition of the fact that the religious man comes to feel practically certain inwardly of the truth of the religious view. But in the alleged absence



of direct objective verification of this subjective intuition, it becomes difficult to find a satisfactory theoretical defense of the belief. Rationalization is not verification. Moreover, in view of the insecurity of speculations as to the subconscious, the assertion that God acts on man only through the subconscious leaves doubly doubtful the (alleged) fact of his having acted upon us at all.

## Chapter XIX

### REACTIONARY IRRATIONALISM

~~~~~

In the preceding chapters of Part IV we have traced through various manifestations the consequences of epistemological dualism in religion, especially in the thought of those who still retain a positive and especially a definitely ethical or Christian religious interest. God, the special object of religious interest, being held to be forever beyond the bounds of human experience, has had to be acknowledged, by frankly logical thought, to be theoretically unknowable. A favorite escape from the negations of agnosticism has been along the broad road of value-appreciation. But pursuing this course has led to a theology which, instead of being, as the word itself implies, centered in God, is, paradoxically enough, centered in man himself, with his feelings and appreciations and the postulates he tends to base upon this subjective foundation.

Nor would it be reasonable to expect to be able to displace this anthropocentric "theology" with one truly theocentric by any merely argumentative process. Knowledge of existent reality comes not by reasoning but by an experience that is at once revelation and discovery. But by his presuppositions the epistemological dualist is, in the nature of things, logically excluded from the possibility of claiming any such revelation or discovery. He has assumed that all man can or ever does experience or know is just his own experience. By the common fallacious disjunction in the analysis of possibilities, all objects have been assumed to be either wholly immanent in or else wholly transcendent of human experience; consequently God, if he be transcendent, is by that same token not experienced, not immanent in man's conscious experience, not revealed in any such sense as to be, by means of man's powers of perception and recognition, at all discoverable.

It would seem, then, that if any revelation and knowledge of divine reality is to be consistently claimed, either the dualistic epistemological presuppositions must be given up in exchange for a critically defensible monistic realism, such as was expressed and expounded in Part III above, or else something must actually happen which, according to dualistic presuppositions, cannot naturally happen. In other words, on dualistic

presuppositions, revelation of divine reality can come only by way of what we call miracle.

Many theologians there are in our day, and some few philosophers, who, rather than revise their dualistic presuppositions, choose to revert to the traditional belief in revelation of divine reality and truth by a process of miraculous divine intervention in external nature or in the cognitive processes of man or, as it is generally maintained, in both. Many times the theologian simply returns to this traditional view without developing any irrationalistic philosophy by means of which his doing so might be consistently defended, as a special instance of real events which are not rationally intelligible. W. E. Orchard in England (*From Faith to Faith*, Harpers, 1933) and in America the late J. G. Machen (*Christianity and Liberalism*, Macmillan, 1923; *The Christian Faith in the Modern World*, Macmillan, 1936; *Contemporary American Theology*, V. Ferm, editor, I, pp. 245-273) will serve as examples. On the other hand, there is sometimes a philosopher who reacts against the rationalistic dictum that "the real is the rational, and the rational is the real," and who defends a fundamental irrationalism in both epistemology and metaphysics, but without making any application of his doctrine for the defense of belief in miraculous divine revelation. The doctrines of the French philosopher, Bergson, may serve as an illustration here (*An Introduction to Metaphysics*, Putnam, 1912; *The Two Sources of Morality and Religion*, Holt, 1935). Inasmuch, however, as in our present investigations we have been considering philosophical theories of knowledge in their religious application, we shall confine our attention in this chapter mainly to the doctrines of religious thinkers who have not only reacted to the traditional belief in the exclusively, or at least principally, miraculous nature of divine revelation, but who have sought, paradoxically enough, to "rationalize" that belief by defending *irrationalism*, both as a theory of reality and as a theory of knowledge. We shall consider the views of Kierkegaard, Unamuno, Barth and Brunner, Tillich, Heim, Aulén and Nygren, and Berdyaev.

Sören Kierkegaard "grew up in the third generation of Goethe and the second generation of Hegel, and came of age in an atmosphere laden to excess with their ideas" (Th. Haecker, *Sören Kierkegaard*, Eng. tr., Oxford, 1937, p. 58). The whole of his work as an author, he tells us, was related to the problem of becoming a Christian (*The Point of View*, Eng. tr. by W. Lowrie, Oxford, 1939, pp. 5, 6). But so dissatisfied did he become with the tendency on the part of many in his day to take the "rational" as the exclusive criterion of the essentially and validly Christian that, as Haecker points out, in insisting, as he did, that Christian faith is "not only above reason, but contrary to reason, not only in cer-

tain cases but always *contrary to reason*," he came close to regarding this "contrary to reason" as the only criterion of the truly Christian (*Ibid.*, p. 61). In rightly rejecting the extreme rationalism of Hegel, he went almost to the opposite extreme. From this point of view he naturally had only contempt and ridicule for such "Hegelian nonsense" as the identity of actuality and the rational idea (*The Journals*, A Selection, edited by A. Dru, Oxford, 1938, par. 1377; W. Lowrie, *Kierkegaard*, Oxford, 1938, p. 552).

"If Hegel had written the whole of his *Logic* and then said, in the preface, that it was merely an experiment in thought in which he had begged the question in many places, then he certainly would have been the greatest thinker who had ever lived. As it is he is merely comic." "One thing always escaped Hegel—what it is to live." "Hegel makes men into heathens, into a race of animals gifted with reason." "Hegel undertook to explain existence, history. . . . How the gods must have laughed! A miserable don like that, who had seen through the necessity of everything and got the whole thing off by heart" (*The Journals*, 497, 610, 1050, 1323. These and other quotations from publications of the Oxford University Press are included with the permission of the publishers).

Kierkegaard was influenced by the dialectical method of Hegel, but he rejected the possibility of the rational synthesis, especially in metaphysics and religion. Instead of going on and on to successive, ever more rational syntheses, he saw nothing for reason to do, when confronted with the ultimate mysteries of religion, but to oscillate back and forth between the yea and nay of thesis and antithesis, without the possibility of synthesis. Our nearest approach to truth, in his opinion, was what to reason is "the absurd," the paradox.

"The idea of philosophy is mediation—Christianity is the paradox." "The paradox is above every system." "It is the duty of the human understanding to understand that there are things which it cannot understand, and what those things are" (*Journals*, 282, 356, 633). For example: "Christianity's paradoxical difference from every other doctrine, from a scientific point of view, is that it posits authority. A philosopher with authority is nonsense. . . . The paradox is that the personality is above the doctrine." "Original sin is guilt—that is the real paradox . . . that something is inherited which by definition cannot be inherited. It must be believed. The paradox in Christian truth is invariably due to the fact that it is truth as it exists for God.

The standard of measure and the end is superhuman; and there is only one relationship possible: faith" (*Ibid.*, 1025, 1061).

This is reminiscent of Tertullian's *credo quia absurdum*, and of the traditional school-boy's definition of faith as believing what you know isn't true. We may agree that what Christianity needs most is not argumentative defense, but aggressiveness in life (W. Lowrie, *Kierkegaard*, p. 322); that reduplicating Christianity in one's own life is a far more effectual recommendation than "proving" its truth "on three grounds" (*Ibid.*, p. 506), and that worship is more likely to lead to (experimental) proof of God than mere speculation (*Ibid.*, p. 336); but we may hesitate to declare out-and-out mockery of God preferable to the honest but mistaken attempt to reach a demonstrative argument for his reality (*Ibid.*, p. 335). Indeed many will feel, and justly, that Kierkegaard comes perilously near to mockery of God when he declares that God "is the most ridiculous being that ever existed" (L. M. Hollander, *Selections from the Writings of Kierkegaard*, Univ. of Texas, 1923, p. 218). Nor is it necessary to declare that "faith is against understanding," or that miracle or "the absurd is the proper object of faith, and the only thing that lets itself be believed" (Lowrie, *op. cit.*, pp. 337, 477; cf. Kierkegaard's *Fear and Trembling*, Eng. tr., Oxford, 1939, pp. 19, 21, 43, 44, 52, 63, 69, 74, etc.).

We may agree as to the limitations of reason. "When everything is explained by an X which is not explained, then in the end nothing is explained at all" (*Journals*, 619). But this does not mean that we must admit that "faith is divine folly," or that its content is the absurd (*Journals*, 446, 1084; *Fear and Trembling*, *passim*). It may often be the case that "Reason has brought God as near as possible, and yet he is as far away as ever" (*Philosophical Fragments*, Eng. tr. by Swenson, Princeton Univ. Press, 1936, p. 36); but if we let Kierkegaard state what he calls the paradoxical truths of faith, we can hardly blame Reason for failing "to get the Paradox into its head," much less justify the declaration that Reason is necessarily "a blockhead and a dunce" (*Ibid.*, p. 42). May it not be the truth that in some of Kierkegaard's statements of it, "the Paradox" really is "folly" (*Ibid.*, p. 41)?

We may appreciate the theocentric character of Kierkegaard's theology, without subscribing to his really agnostic as well as irrationalistic doctrine that God and man are "absolutely unlike" (*Ibid.*, p. 37), that the qualitative difference between them is "endless" (Lowrie, *op. cit.*, p. 9; cf. pp. 548, 550). Nor is it honoring to God to make the blanket statement that "before God we are always in the wrong" (*Ibid.*, pp. 271, 503); that "before God man is nothing" (*Journals*, 712), that God cannot be

served by us, but only worshipped (*Ibid.*, 1381; W. Lowrie, *op. cit.*, p. 550; cf. pp. 332, 421-422).

Back of all this negative theocentrism there is, of course, the exaggerated anti-Hegelian anti-rationalism, according to which, it is scarcely too much to say, the real is irrational and the irrational is the real; but back of that again is the dualistic and logically agnostic epistemology according to which neither experience nor rational reflection can serve to give us either real religious knowledge or positive religious truth. God is utterly transcendent; man can neither attain to nor know him. Silence is the part of true wisdom, the proper culmination of all effort at prayer. An impression of piety is gained for this religious negativism by making use of Scriptural language in the words of the skeptical and pessimistic "preacher": "God is in heaven, and thou upon earth; therefore, let thy words be few" (Eccl. 5:2). As Kierkegaard puts it, "In relation to God it can easily become the ruin of man who is able to speak that he is too willing to speak. God is in heaven, man upon earth; therefore they cannot well talk together" (*Works*, XI, pp. 15-20; Lowrie, *op. cit.*, pp. 421-422).

In ethics, as we should expect from his pronounced irrationalism, Kierkegaard's position is individualistic and particularistic. In obedience to the arbitrary will of God the individual may rightly transgress the general law, so that to all others the moral quality of his act must remain incomprehensible (*Fear and Trembling*, pp. 76, 78, 79, 100, 102, 118; Hollander, *op. cit.*, p. 25). The weight of Kierkegaard's emphasis is upon sin, and he is especially preoccupied with the dogma of original sin and guilt, which dogma, irrational as it is acknowledged to be, must nevertheless be accepted and affirmed (Lowrie, *op. cit.*, pp. 76, 127, 184, 281-282, 412; *Journals*, 28, 100, 102, 1061).

The same irrationalistic prepossession determines the interpretation of revelation. To begin with a consideration of the historic man, Jesus, and from a consideration of what we know of him apart from faith and what the consequences of his life in human history have been, and on such a foundation to seek, by way of an appreciation of his value and function, as we would put it, an understanding of the dogma of his divinity, is denounced as "blasphemy." "One cannot learn anything about Christ from history." "He is the paradox, the object of faith, and exists only for faith." "Man must decide for himself"—arbitrarily, it would seem, and not on the basis of any reasons—"whether he will believe Christ to be what he himself affirmed he was, that is, God" (Hollander, *op. cit.*, pp. 167, 170-172). To believe in Christ is the "only permissible mode of approach" to him, and when we have made use of this historically "inadmissible and unlawful way," we learn something about him which we could not learn from the historic facts (*Ibid.*, p. 177).

During his earthly life he preserved "the strictest incognito" and was unrecognizable as divine (Lowrie, *op. cit.*, p. 427). Only a faith which is against understanding, according to Kierkegaard, a faith miraculously bestowed by an act of God, can recognize that Jesus Christ is God (*Ibid.*, pp. 317, 477; *Fragments*, p. 53; cf. David Hume, *Philosophical Works*, 1854 edn., IV, pp. 146, 149, 150). Now the true course, we may believe, lies midway between the extreme of impersonal intellectualism which Kierkegaard attacks and the opposite irrationalistic extreme which he represents. If we would come to a true interpretation of the historic Jesus as Revealer of God and Saviour of men, we must wholeheartedly and steadily respond to his moral and religious appeal *as far and as fully as we honestly can*.

The vital thing in Kierkegaard's religion is not his irrationalism, which was with him an almost pathological obsession. (On his confessedly "almost crazy melancholy," and his "indescribable horror of Both-And," see Lowrie, *op. cit.*, pp. 27, 45-48, 61, 70, 76, 97-99, 131, 144-146, 199-200, 228, 230-231, 347, 353, 380, 387, 405, 451, 460, 538, 554.) That flight of his, from the extreme rationalism of Hegel's "The Real is the Rational, and the Rational is the Real" to the opposite extreme of, The Real is the Irrational, and the Irrational is the Real, is the great blemish upon all his religious thought. That which makes his thought vital, significant and timely for our generation is the deep inwardness of his religious experience and reflection, and his emphasis upon the need and possibility of spiritual regeneration. I do not here refer primarily to the experience which Kierkegaard describes as "the great earthquake," which was accompanied by so keen and depressing a consciousness of guilt (*Ibid.*, pp. 68-69, etc.), nor even mainly to what Dr. Lowrie calls his "first conversion," a seemingly somewhat mystical experience of "indescribable joy" (*Ibid.*, pp. 170-176; cf. p. 391). Rather would I stress "the religious conversion which occurred in Holy Week, 1848," which seems to have been the culmination of processes long at work, and of which Kierkegaard himself wrote, "My whole nature is changed. . . . I must speak. . . . I believe now that Christ will help me to triumph over my melancholy" (*Ibid.*, pp. 391ff., 400-401, 406; cf. Lowrie's Introduction to Kierkegaard's *Christian Discourses*, Oxford, 1939, p. xi). This experience left its beneficent mark on the last few years of his life. He had previously set up as the ideal of purity of heart, "to will one thing" (*Purify Your Hearts!* 1847, Eng. tr., London, 1937, pp. 53-97, 97-143),—a thing very easy to recognize but exceedingly difficult to do (Lowrie, *op. cit.*, p. 293). Now, however, he could write—from experience, apparently, and with thought of himself: "A man of iron will whose will is broken . . . by God, is a Christian. . . . A Christian is a man of iron will who no longer desires his own will, but with the passion of his

contrite will—fundamentally changed—desires the will of another" (*Ibid.*, p. 489; cf. *Christian Discourses*, pp. 83-93, 184-196, 222-227, 333-346; cf. *Fragments*, Introduction, p. xxx). He was, says his biographer, "fundamentally changed"; there is now "no trace of indecision." "S. K. was no longer a melancholy man"; "he shows no longer the slightest symptom of a pathological condition of mind"; "the battle issued in a decisive victory" (Lowrie, *op. cit.*, pp. 487, 489, 491). This was an experience not merely rational but in a sense super-rational; yet it was not at all irrational. Existentially creative, it was in value divine. Well might Kierkegaard speak, in this connection, of the gracious work of God (*Ibid.*, p. 9; *Journals*, 1154, 1283, 1288-1290). "The 'imitation of Christ' must be introduced," he acknowledges, "but 'Grace,' " he insists, "is the decisive point" (*Journals*, 1252).

Kierkegaard's thinking on this subject was vital and *edifying*—he dares to use the word ("Nur die Wahrheit die dich erbaut, ist Wahrheit für dich." *Entweder-Oder*, II, p. 308; Lowrie, *op. cit.*, pp. 302, 411)—because it had not been worked out purely theoretically, but had been assimilated in terms of his own existence (Lowrie, *op. cit.*, pp. 277, 302; *Journals*, 1199). His path was "all his own," not perhaps in the sense of mere intellectual originality, but in the sense that "it was one trodden in pain, and at the outset not quite clear to him. Only by violence and commitment both inward and outward, consciously directed with force and passion, was it gradually revealed to him and to others" (Haecker, *op. cit.*, p. 53). His was "truth for an exister," where "objective uncertainly is grasped with the apprehension of the most passionate inwardness" (Lowrie, *op. cit.*, p. 318; cf. pp. 301, 344). He had undertaken to find and in the end he found a truth which was truth *for him*, the idea for which he could willingly live or die (Hollander, *Selections*, p. 14; cf. p. 224).

The one Almighty God, human freedom and responsibility, individual immortality, and salvation through the death of Christ—these were some of the objective uncertainties of which Kierkegaard became, through "existential thinking," subjectively certain. The "existential expression" of the doctrine of the Almighty Creator-God is to worship in "fear and trembling" (Haecker, *op. cit.*, p. 63). "This notion of the single individual man before God is something that speculation never can get into its head; all it does is to universalize the individual fantastically in the race" (Lowrie, *op. cit.*, p. 400). The ethical individual's knowledge of himself "is not mere contemplation, for in this the individual is envisaged as determined by necessity; it is rather a reflection upon oneself which is at the same time an act, and hence I have deliberately used the expression 'to choose oneself,' instead of 'to know oneself'" (*Ibid.*, p. 244; cf. p. 375). "Immortality cannot be proved at all systematically. . . . Instead of seeking outward proofs one might better seek to become a little

subjective. Immortality is the most passionate interest of subjectivity; precisely in the interest lies the proof" (*Ibid.*, p. 344). The "existential expression" of the mediation of Christ and our salvation through his death on the cross, is repentance and faith in the forgiveness of sins (Haecker, *op. cit.*, p. 64).

These particular subjective certainties of individual faith were not set forth in the form of a self-consistent system of doctrine making objective claims to universal acceptance. For Kierkegaard "a logical system is possible; but a *system* of existence is impossible" (*Postscript*; Lowrie, *op. cit.*, pp. 235, 375; *Journals*, 1054). Perhaps it was a fault in his thinking, or in his presuppositions, that he did not sufficiently consider the possibility of a unitary system of "existentially" achieved truths of faith. His dualistic religious epistemology made the conclusion logical that objective religious knowledge was humanly unattainable. The way of subjective intuition and personal decision, indispensable as it is, was taken to be in itself sufficient, without further logical or philosophical systematization, and was pursued with an almost fierce determination and satisfaction, in spite of paradox and seeming irrationality (Cf. Troeltsch on Kierkegaard, *Gesammelte Schriften*, III, *Der Historismus*, etc., p. 312). If, however, Kierkegaard had been able to shake off the weight of the nineteenth century's Kantian dualistic inheritance, he might have been able, by means of thinking which was at once "existential" and objectively philosophical, to have held to the partially immanent, divinely functioning presence of an only partly transcendent God, revealed in nature and in man, but especially in the ethico-religious experience of deliverance from evil and in its greatest individual historic exemplar. On the basis of such empirical data, selected through the use of criteria at once valuational and existential, a truly theocentric theology might well be founded, or at least attempted, as one which would not only make fundamental and intelligible use of the concept and fact of divine revelation, but which, in the central place given to the religious experience of regeneration interpreted as a creative and self-revealing act of God, would even make room for the retention of all that is vitally essential in the traditional concept of miracle.

The Spanish Catholic, Don Miguel de Unamuno, quotes with approval "what our brother Kierkegaard has to say" in criticism of the attempt to solve such a problem as that of personal immortality by means of abstract, impersonal reasoning (*The Tragic Sense of Life*, Eng. tr., Macmillan, 1926, pp. 109, 110). "Faith in immortality is irrational," and "not only irrational, but contra-rational"; not only is there "no way of proving the immortality of the soul rationally"; on the contrary, "there are ways of proving rationally its mortality" (*Ibid.*, pp. 79, 111, 117, 198). But this

does not and should not settle the matter for us. Reason and Faith, philosophy and religion, are enemies. Reason is the enemy of life (*Ibid.*, pp. 90, 111, 113). There is an "eternal conflict between reason and feeling, science and life" (*Ibid.*, p. 108). What reason denies, faith makes bold to affirm. "Faith is in its essence simply a matter of will, not of reason," and "to believe is to wish to believe." "To believe in the immortality of the soul is to wish that the soul may be immortal, but to wish it with such force that this volition shall trample reason under foot and pass beyond it" (*Ibid.*, p. 114). Against reason we accept "the irrational faith that Christ rose from the dead in order to raise us from the dead" (*Ibid.*, pp. 111-112).

It is not otherwise with the problem of God. "The problem of the existence of God . . . is rationally insoluble"; reason can prove neither the possibility nor the impossibility of his existence. But, as it is with immortality, so it is here. "It is not rational necessity, but vital anguish that impels us to believe in God. And to believe in God . . . is, before all and above all, to feel a hunger for God, . . . to wish that God may exist, . . . to wish to save the human finality of the Universe." "To resign oneself to there not being a God is . . . a terrible and inhuman thing." But "to believe in God is to long for his existence, and . . . to act as if he existed; it is to live by this longing and to make it the inner spring of our action. This longing begets hope, [and] hope begets faith" (*Ibid.*, pp. 114, 184-185). "Our faith in God is, above all, hope in Him. . . . And our fundamental hope, the root and stem of all our hopes, is the hope of eternal life" (*Ibid.*, p. 200).

As for what God is, that too is a matter to be settled for us, not by reason, but by subjective intuition and will. "The belief in a personal and spiritual God is based on the belief in our own personality and spirituality. Because we feel ourselves to be consciousness, we feel God to be consciousness—that is to say, a person; and because we desire ardently that our consciousness shall live and be independently of the body, we believe that the divine person lives and exists independently of the universe" (*Ibid.*, pp. 149-150). This God of feeling, "the living subjective God," the "vital God," or "God of the heart," is "Supreme Love" (*Ibid.*, pp. 155, 166). Later, he is converted into the God of reason, a God who "has to submit to the logical law of contradiction." And so "in the necessity of God, His free will perishes" (*Ibid.*, pp. 159, 163, 194). Thus "reason separates us from . . . the living God, the Father of Christ" (*Ibid.*, p. 167). But "our hearts' truth, anti-rational though it be," is "the knowledge of God [which] proceeds from the love of God, and this has little or nothing of the rational in it"; and on that foundation, we build our faith in "the immortality of the human soul, . . . the truth of the human finality of the Universe." For the moral will

of man the message of such faith is: "Act so that in your own judgment and in the judgment of others you may merit eternity, act so that you may become irreplaceable, act so that you may not merit death" (*Ibid.*, pp. 167, 263).

Unamuno is concerned with the transcendent aspects of the objects of religious interest, almost as if there were no other aspects, which, apart from the content and attendant circumstances of supposed miraculous revelation, would seem to be the case, according to his point of view. This means that epistemologically his presuppositions are practically those of epistemological dualism. Empirical religious knowledge being ruled out as unattainable, and since any faith supposed by modern speculative philosophers to be rationally necessary proves vastly different in content from that of the traditional Catholic faith, Unamuno falls an easy victim to an extreme irrationalism in religion, with such consequences as we have already seen. In defiance of scientific and rationalistic thought, wherever necessary, traditional dogmas and subjective intuitions are affirmed by act of will, without regard to the way in which they might or might not be found on critical philosophical examination to be reasonably permissible as beliefs. It may be that Unamuno's despair of finding any reasonable theoretical defense of the Catholic system of dogma has led him to underestimate what can be done to vindicate, on critical grounds, the theoretical permissibility of such essentials of Christian faith as the existence of a Christlike God and the immortality of the soul.

We turn now to a consideration of that contemporary theological movement which most conspicuously exhibits the irrationalistic way of attempted escape from the religious agnosticism logically bound up with a dualistic religious epistemology. I refer to the movement variously known as "the theology of crisis," "Barthianism," and "the dialectical theology." Our attention will be given chiefly to Karl Barth, secondarily to Emil Brunner, with an occasional reference to Gogarten, Thurneysen, Bultmann, and a few British and American reviewers of the literature and expositors of the doctrines of this "new," though, on the face of it, quite reactionary theology.

For good or ill, this theology of crisis is, in the main, a part of the aftermath of the World War. Barth's work on *The Epistle to the Romans* was first written almost within "the sound of the guns booming away in the north"; "nor was the situation materially different," he points out, when he rewrote the whole book in 1921 (Preface to the English edition, Oxford, 1933, pp. v, vi). Especially for Germans and German sympathizers, "optimism had been replaced by pessimism; Spengler's *Decline of the West* seemed to echo the mind of all" (J. McConnachie, *The Barthian*

Theology, Hodder and Stoughton, 1933, p. 38). In an address delivered in 1920, Friedrich Gogarten declared the War to have been but the premonitory symptom of a more serious and deep-seated evil. The world had fallen from God, and was under judgment (*Die religiöse Entscheidung*, p. 45; McConnachie, *op. cit.*, pp. 13, 14). Spengler's famous book, said Brunner, "has called to our attention in glaring headlines what all of us have more or less felt, that the disintegrating tendencies of our modern world have led us to a decisive point where the issue can be only one of two things: either new life or death" (*The Theology of Crisis*, 1929, p. 1). The religious reaction led by Barth was the expression of revulsion against the whole civilization and leadership which was held responsible for the great world-catastrophe. Barth himself, who a few years before had begun his work optimistically as a Christian socialist, though of the somewhat quietistic school of Kutter rather than as a disciple of the more activistic Ragaz (W. Pauck, *Karl Barth*, Harpers, 1931, Ch. III; P. B. Means, *Things That Are Caesar's*, Round Table Press, 1935, pp. 130-132, 139-140), became thoroughly disillusioned as to any possibility of progress along the lines of liberal Christianity toward the realization of the Kingdom of God on earth; and even as early as 1916 he began to warn "the happy gentleman of culture, who drives up so briskly in his little car of progress and so cheerfully displays the pennants of his various ideals," that ere long he would have reason to be apprehensive of the righteous judgment of God, not only against the War and other recognized evils, but against the whole unrighteous social order of which they were but the conspicuous result (*The Word of God and the Word of Man*, tr. by D. Horton, Pilgrim Press, 1928, p. 17).

The Barthian reaction shows the effect of a great variety of influences. The dualistic epistemology and consequent theoretical agnosticism of Kant form the background against which we must view Barth's theology, if we would understand some of its most characteristic features. Then there was the whole theology of the religious consciousness, from Schleiermacher through the Ritschlian development and down to Wobbermin and Troeltsch; from this religious liberalism, to which he was exposed as a theological student, Barth broke away, reacting against it finally with a remarkable display of feeling. The spiritual earnestness of his "unforgettable teacher," Herrmann (*The Word of God*, etc., p. 100), has been an abiding influence, as has that same teacher's tendency to drive the distinction between scientific and religious truth to the verge of logical dualism. Otto's conception of God as "wholly other" proved suggestive, but more decidedly determining was the defiant religious irrationalism of Kierkegaard. Among other potent influences were Feuerbach's humanistic psychology of religion, the somber realism of Dostoievsky's view of man's nature

and condition, the rather negative results of radical *Leben-Jesu-Forschung*, Schaefer's timely emphasis upon the properly theocentric character of theology, and, once Barth's own reaction to conservatism had taken place, the theologians of the Reformation, especially Luther and Calvin.

Karl Barth's chief significance for the history of Christianity in our time will be found, we may believe, in his prophetic preaching and writing in the early years following the Great War, rather than in his later work as a constructive theologian. In the beginning his message came as a much needed "corrective theology," "a kind of marginal note"; which, he was at that time convinced, would lose its meaning if it were to become more than a note and take up space as a new theology. It was intended to be simply, in Kierkegaard's phrase, "a pinch of spice in the food." It was like the accidental ringing of a bell, a finger pointing out, to a despairing people who "had ceased to believe in anything and yet that needed desperately to believe in something," the Word of God in Christ (Barth, *Die christliche Dogmatik im Entwurf*, I, 1927, pp. vii, ix; *The Word of God and the Word of Man*, pp. 98, 103; H. Rolston, *A Conservative Looks to Barth and Brunner*, Cokesbury, 1933, p. 99).

But with Barth's appointment to a theological chair the work of the systematizer began, and already we are asked to wade through some fifteen hundred German pages of the revised version of the "first volume" of a promised five-volume *Dogmatik*. We can hardly be censured for feeling that perhaps Barth's first thought was right, and that his original prophetic message "loses its significance" in what promises to be little more than a belated reproduction of the dogmatics of Protestant scholasticism. From the point of view of an interest in religious epistemology, however, the Barthian theology is not without considerable significance.

The Kantian dualism with its logically agnostic consequences persists in Barthianism, as has been intimated. Modern liberalism is roundly condemned for its emphasis upon divine immanence. Brunner is careful to explain that what is meant by the insistence upon the transcendence of God in opposition to the religion of immanence is not that God is not actively working in nature and in history, but only that his presence there is hidden from us; the transcendence is epistemological, not cosmological (*The Theology of Crisis*, p. 28; cf. *The Word and the World*, Scribners, 1931, p. 7). But according to Barth, "except in His Word, God is never for us in the world, that is to say, in our space and time" (*Theological Existence Today*, Hodder and Stoughton, 1933, p. 12). As Kierkegaard insisted, following Ecclesiastes: "God is in heaven, and thou upon earth" (*Romans*, p. 10). There is no way "through na-

ture to God," "through science to faith." The world as it is is not God's work. God is *Deus absconditus*; inaccessible to our religious approach. The mystic's talk of union with God is rejected as blasphemy, as a deification of self. God is never an object of direct human experience. The God the religious man speaks of as being present in the heart, or feelings, is an idol (*Epistle to the Romans*, p. 38). The supposition that God can be known directly is heathenism, as Kierkegaard insisted. God has nothing to do with the individual life. It is not there that the will of God is done or can be done. Salvation belongs in the transcendent, supertemporal, superhistorical world of God. It is not a matter of religious experience. There is no possible experiential verification of faith. There is no knowledge of God possible through man's religious or metaphysical faculties, "or through his religious experience" (Brunner, *The Word and the World*, p. 16). As inexperienceable, God is not only unknowable; he is unthinkable (*The Doctrine of the Word of God*, Eng. tr. by G. T. Thomson, T. & T. Clark, 1936, pp. 206-207). *Finitum non capax infiniti* (*Romans*, p. 212). God is, and, so far as man's capacities are concerned, must remain "the Great Unknown." He is "the Wholly Other," according to Barth, "the infinite aggregate of all merely relative others" (*The Epistle to the Romans*, pp. 244-250; *The Word of God and the Word of Man*, p. 74; cf. pp. 24, 64, 75, 91, 92, 94). As Gogarten puts it, he is "the Unknown by our knowing, the Unconceived by our concepts, the Measureless for our measures, the Inexperienceable for our experiences" (*Von Glauben und Offenbarung*, p. 11). God "must never be identified with anything which we name, or experience, or conceive, or worship, as God" (Barth, *The Epistle to the Romans*, Eng. tr., p. 331). For the natural reason of man the content of faith is irrationality, a scandal and a stumbling-block (Barth, *The Resurrection of the Dead*, Eng. tr., Hodder and Stoughton, 1933, p. 124).

In view of this state of affairs, Barth takes sides with the irrationalist Kierkegaard against the rationalist Hegel (Cf. Brunner, *Erlebnis, Erkenntnis, und Glaube*, pp. 114-126). Instead of a dialectic in which antitheses are overcome in higher and ever higher syntheses, man in seeking the truth about God finds himself between Scylla and Charybdis, between contrary "truths" which he is unable to reconcile in a third (*Die christliche Dogmatik im Entwurf*, I, 1927, pp. 71, 72). "Dialectic is all that can be expected from me," says Barth. "Neither my affirmation nor my denial lays claim to being God's truth. . . . Truth stands in the center, between every Yes and No. And therefore I have never affirmed without denying and never denied without affirming, for neither affirmation nor denial can be final" (*The Word of God and the Word of Man*, p. 209). "God, who confronts all human disquiet with an unconditional command, 'Halt!' and all human rest with an equally unconditional

command, 'Advance!' " is for our thinking also "the 'Yes' in our 'No' and the 'No' in our 'Yes,' the First and the Last, and consequently the Unknown" (*The Epistle to the Romans*, p. 331). What we have is "at best . . . the two halves of the truth, which we cannot unite" (*The Resurrection of the Dead*, p. 85). We are restricted to the dialectic of unresolved contradiction, the dialectic of paradox. Instead of integrating thesis and antithesis in a more rational synthesis, it disintegrates proposed syntheses into thesis and antithesis, which remain irreconcilable (Cf. *The Doctrine of the Word of God*, p. 237; *The Word of God and the Word of Man*, pp. 73, 167-169, 174, 176, 177, 206-208).

In view of this state of affairs, both preacher and theologian are confronted with an awkward situation. The preacher "should speak of God and yet cannot." "Only God himself can speak of God. The task of the minister is the word of God. This spells the certain defeat of the ministry. It is the frustration of every ministry and every minister" (*The Word of God and the Word of Man*, pp. 212, 214). Theology and preaching are alike an attempt to do the impossible. It is like trying to draw a picture of a flying bird. One should be prepared for partial failure from the start (*The Resurrection of the Dead*, pp. 116, 118). It is a question whether theology can pass beyond the prolegomena (*The Word of God, etc.*, p. 217). Does this account for the fact that the 463 pages of the first edition of Barth's promised five-volume *Dogmatics* has been displaced by a second edition totalling 1504 pages, in which, moreover, the author is still dealing exclusively with what he calls "prolegomena"? It would seem that either the projected system of theology will have to be given up, or else the dialectic of frustration and perpetual paradox will have to go. Indeed, in the second edition of "Volume One" evidence is not wanting that the Kierkegaardian dialectic is already in process of being sacrificed.

In this so-called "theology of crisis" the term "crisis" is variously applied, but its principal uses are first, in referring to the crisis in modern culture in general, including the crisis in which modern Christianity finds itself, for example, in Germany; and secondly, a crisis in the life of the individual. This is not so particularly the crisis out of which religious attitudes arise, as it is the crisis within the life of religion itself, the crisis in which God turns out to be different from what we had thought, the crisis which arises when we discover that there is "no way from man to God" (Barth, *The Epistle to the Romans*, pp. 225, 243; *The Word of God and the Word of Man*, Ch. I; pp. 94, 126, 136-137, 151, 172, 177-180; *Church Dogmatics*, Vol. I, Part I, 1932, p. 183; Brunner, *The Theology of Crisis*, pp. 8, 60, 61, 103; *The Word and the World*, p. 7).

The Barthians, and especially Barth himself, speak in very disparag-

ing terms of the religious consciousness of the natural man. As the endeavor of man by his own unaided powers to attain unto God and enter into fellowship with him, it is foredoomed to failure. It is all too human. "There is no way from man to God" (*The Epistle to the Romans*, p. 245). "We cannot give ourselves faith" (*The Doctrine of the Word of God*, p. 200). Religious self-help is an expression of pride, arrogance, presumption (*The Word of God and the Word of Man*, pp. 68, 86, 87; *The Epistle to the Romans*, p. 241). "The religious man as such is a sinner" (*Romans*, p. 257). Human religion is like bubbles rising in the swamp of human life. It is more a door for obscure demonic forces than for God's revelation. "The pandemonium of human piety is dangerous to the God-seeking soul" (*Romans*, p. 212). It was pride for Schleiermacher to build a theology on religious data found in human souls, on a religious consciousness which is fallacious and unable to attain to God (Cf. *Romans*, pp. 225, 235-239). Jesus has nothing to do with religion (*The Word of God*, etc., p. 88). Religion is a dangerous enemy (*Romans*, p. 268). It "has a right to exist only when it does away with itself" (*The Word of God*, etc., p. 67). "Religion must die. In God we are rid of it" (*Romans*, p. 238). Faith at its best is a mere empty space, a receptacle for revelation and the grace of God. In short, religion without revelation is what Feuerbach said it was, mere wishful thinking, whose gods are the creations of human wishes (Barth, *The Resurrection of the Dead*, p. 165).

The crisis in religion is an opportunity for decision, indeed the necessity of decision (*Romans*, pp. 242, 244, 246, 248, 258, 266, 276). Furthermore, the extremity of man's crisis is God's opportunity. There was no way from man to God, "but it pleased God in his mercy to throw a bridge across the chasm between himself and man and to blaze a trail where man himself could not go. It pleased God to visit man who cannot come to God." "All religion bases salvation upon an activity of man," but "faith is real faith only when man has . . . relinquished his trust in religion and rests on God alone" (Brunner, *The Theology of Crisis*, pp. 60, 61, 103; cf. Barth, *The Word of God*, etc., pp. 179, 181). The way from God to men is Jesus Christ. "In the Gospel of Christ the Truth of God . . . breaks forth like a flash of lightning" (Barth, *The Epistle to the Romans*, p. 331). "The Word of God, whose name is Jesus Christ . . . creates the Christian apprehension of revelation," which is faith. And "the Christian apprehension of revelation . . . takes place only through revelation"; indeed "the apprehension is itself revelation" (Barth, in *Revelation*, edited by J. Baillie, Faber, 1937, pp. 42, 61). The faith which apprehends the revelation is thus the gracious gift of God in and through the revelation. "Before man has decided, a *decision* has descended" (*Ibid.*, p. 60).

Three special points in connection with this doctrine of revelation demand further attention, namely, the relation of revelation to the historic Jesus, the alleged miraculousness of faith in Christ as revelation, and the relation of revelation to Scripture. According to Brunner, "dependence upon a historical event and a historical person belongs to the essence of revelation" (*God and Man*, Eng. tr., S. C. M. Press, 1936, p. 57). According to Barth, while it may be granted that other religions have what they call "revelation," Jesus Christ is the one and only true revelation. "Revelation does not differ from the Person of Jesus Christ" (*The Doctrine of the Word of God*, pp. 134, 156). "Revelation which can be repeated," he says, "is not revelation" (*Revelation*, pp. 45, 46, 48, 52, 53). On the contrary, from our empirical point of view, while ready to grant the supreme and properly normative character of the revelation of God in Christ, our contention would be that only that revelation which is in principle repeatable, under appropriate conditions, in other lives can be reasonably taken as true revelation of the impartial God who is ever "waiting to be gracious." And if on grounds of historical criticism we should feel obliged to regard the essential historicity of Jesus as doubtful, we should not find ourselves for that reason logically obliged to give up an essentially Christian faith in God. The divine in Christ may be held to be our highest and the only satisfactory normative revelation of God, but if there is experience elsewhere of a divinely functioning reality, we are not without a word of God to man, and future possibilities of revelation are still open. Barth himself follows Paul in interpreting Christian eschatology as signifying further revelation of God in the future (*The Resurrection of the Dead*, pp. 85-88).

But it was not in the life or spirit of the historic Jesus that God revealed himself once for all, according to Barth. The humanity of Jesus was not, as such, the revelation (*The Doctrine of the Word of God*, p. 371). The divinity was not so immanent in the humanity of Christ as not also to remain transcendent (*Ibid.*). "How Jesus found God, how he prayed, how he lived, is not divine revelation for us. . . . The so-called historical Jesus is not as such the Christ" (Brunner, *The Theology of Crisis*, p. 36). Jesus of Nazareth, dying on the cross, is a tragic figure, a stumbling-block for faith. In letting his Son die with the question, "Why hast thou forsaken me?" on his lips, God reveals himself as the God eternally silent and hidden. All we see on the cross is a finger pointing to something hidden which can only be believed. The resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead by the act of God the Father is the revelation that the Crucified One was and is the Son of God (*Ibid.*, p. 371; *The Word of God and the Word of Man*, *passim*).

Before examining further this positive element in the Barthian doc-

trine of revelation in Christ, I wish to quote with approval the complaint of Canon Oliver C. Quick against Barth and Brunner for often speaking "as though it were treason to the Christian faith to commend the truth of the Christian revelation to non-Christians on the ground that the character of Jesus is surpassingly good and beautiful, and that His life reveals thereby the beauty and goodness of the Godhead" (*The Ground of Faith and the Chaos of Thought*, Nisbet, 1931, p. 100). Especially from the point of view of our monistic religious realism, according to which, other conditions remaining the same, a divinely functioning reality is revealed in proportion to the fidelity with which the right religious adjustment is maintained, it is precisely in the life and character of Jesus of Nazareth that we should look for the primary manifestation of God in him.

But from Barth's point of view the revelation of God in Christ is discernible only by means of a miraculously bestowed faith. The possibility of faith does not go automatically with the fact that Jesus is a revelation of the Father, or is the Son and Word of God. It is *given* to know that mystery (Barth, *The Doctrine of the Word of God*, pp. 208-209, 224, 514). The certainty of the Christian resurrection-faith does not rest upon the adequacy of the evidence for the empty tomb or even for the veridical appearances of the risen Jesus to his disciples. The Gospel can be accepted only in faith, and faith is not based upon evidence (*Ibid.*, pp. 233-235). It is a standpoint in the air—an impossible position. Or rather, it is possible only by miracle. Thus Barth agrees with Hume: the miracle of the Resurrection can only be believed as a result of the miraculous bestowal of faith. Fundamentally, indeed, faith is the only miracle (*The Epistle to the Romans; The Word of God and the Word of Man*, pp. 91, etc.; *The Doctrine of the Word of God*, pp. 188, 191-192, 276-277, 282-283, 380-381, 459, 466-468, 470-471, 474, 514, 522-523; *Revelation*, p. 61); but by this door much of what was questioned on grounds of external evidence is readmitted. For example, while the dogma of the virgin birth is but the form and fashion of the witness of the true divinity and humanity of Jesus Christ, and the messages of the empty tomb and the resurrection appearances but the sign that God is free Lord over human existence and destiny, the sign is to be affirmed by faith as well as the thing signified. "Up to now, . . . the content, the thing, has always been lost when the form, the sign has gone." "To deny [the] sign would mean to deny also the thing signified" (*Credo*, Scribners, 1936, pp. 63, 104).

The difficulty with regard to this doctrine of the miraculousness of faith is not primarily the difficulty of squaring it with the working principles of science, but rather its obvious contradiction of the Christian faith in the impartiality and reasonableness of God. It is not that

the ideas of divine grace and divine creativity are objectionable, either religiously or philosophically or even from a sufficiently self-critical scientific point of view. What is objectionable from all three points of view is what Troeltsch called an *exclusive* supernaturalism, according to which God, purely of his own arbitrary will, works miracles of revelation and faith for some and not for others. We have no criterion for detecting such miracles scientifically; we should want no miraculous interventions to bestow favors exclusively upon an elect few; and if we must hold that creative intervention is God's way, or one of God's ways of counteracting or eradicating evil in the world, our scientific, religious and philosophical interests combine to support the surmise that experience will show such divinely functioning creativity to be universally dependent upon the existence or fulfilment of certain definite conditions, natural or human.

The view taken of the relation of revelation ("Word of God") to the Bible in the Barthian theology is sharply distinguished from the fundamentalist position. No objection is made to the literary and historical criticism of the Biblical writings. The miracles of the Bible are not necessarily to be taken as historic events. Not everything in the Bible is Word of God, but God speaks to us out of the Bible. "The Bible is God's Word, . . . so far as God speaks through it" (*The Doctrine of the Word of God*, p. 123). The Bible is to be read in what Thurneysen calls "a new way," but in reality in what is the old, old way, namely, not to find what men thought about God, but to find what God says to us (Barth, *The Word of God and the Word of Man*, pp. 39, 43; McConnachie, *op. cit.*, p. 94). There is revelation in the Bible, and not religion only. But when we find God truly speaking to us from the written Word, it is because of a God-given faith and revelation, or "testimony of the Spirit" speaking simultaneously in our hearts. "The Word of God is God himself in the Holy Scripture" (*Die christliche Dogmatik*, 2nd half-vol., p. 505). This is a definition to which we offer no objection, embodying as it does an intuition which we share. It would be a more accurate way of speaking, however, if the term "revelation" were used as applying primarily to God or the divine as perceptibly present to some extent in events, in life and experience. Scriptural statements and doctrinal propositions could then be referred to as records and interpretations of revelation, potentially instrumental to the repetition of similar revelation in other lives.

The only further question is as to the norm or norms which are to be used to distinguish the revelation or the written embodiment of the revelation in Scripture. In our opinion the norm or criterion, whether of revelation of divine reality in religious experience or of the verbal embodiment of revelation, is of a valuational nature. Barth, of

course, would not agree. For him the faith in revelation is "its own witness," its own criterion (*The Doctrine of the Word of God*, pp. 213-216, 224). This is dogmatism, simple, pure, and ultimate.

There is much to appreciate as well as much to criticize in the Barthian theology. It is fundamentally justified as a protest and reaction against a seriously depotentiated religious liberalism, a movement aiming to displace not only all rationalistic theologies but the liberal theologies of the religious consciousness with a reconstructed dynamic evangelical theology, related to evangelical Christian faith today as the Reformation theology was to the evangelical faith of that day. But, like most passionate reactions, this movement of protest has gone to the other one-sided extreme, and so is itself in need of correction. Still, as Brunner once said, referring to the more immoderate Barth, "God uses the genius of one-sidedness as well as the spirits of moderation" (*Natur und Gnade*, 2nd edn., 1935, p. 44), and on the whole we can be thankful for some things which Barth and others of his way of thinking have done for Christianity and especially for Protestantism in the last twenty years.

But, having conceded so much, I hasten to add that it seems to me, as it must to many, to have been an extremely awkward attempt to do something which greatly needed to be done. It was like trying to split a block by driving a wedge into it butt-end foremost. What we needed primarily was a revitalized Christian evangelism and the construction or reconstruction of a theology which would prove not only reasonably tenable as a system of thought but effectively functional as a preaching message to stimulate and guide that renewed evangelism. What Barthianism has been giving us instead is pretty much the old externally authoritarian (*The Doctrine of the Word of God*, p. 237) irrationalistic theology of the evangelical Calvinism of two or three hundred years ago, (*Ibid.*, pp. 182, 184, 192, 229, 237), while the interests of the evangelism we so sorely need have been left to take care of themselves. A few obvious but superficial accommodations to modern knowledge and scholarship have been made, and it is even rumored that Barth's neo-Calvinism is taken by himself with a generous grain of the liberal salt of universalism; but, be that as it may, and explain it as you will, there has been about the movement we are considering, with some honorable exceptions, a certain non-mystical quietism and disinclination to aggressive personal evangelism, to forward-looking missionary activity, and to work for social reform, which is reminiscent of the obstructions which the old hyper-Calvinism put in the way of the modern missionary movement at its inception a century and a half ago, and which augurs not too well for the permanent value of the Barthian theology for practical Christianity. "Speaking generally," says Barth, "the Church

has not to be at the service of mankind" (*Theological Existence Today*, p. 51).

We would not dispute the need not only for emphasizing theoretically but also for seeking practically the divine initiative in Christian religious experience; but since it is pretty well agreed among Christians that the divine initiative has taken place in the historic Christian revelation, and since the way from God to man has been travelled, we would respectfully inquire whether the time may not now be opportune for changing back from the Barthian refrain, "There is no way from man to God," to the preaching message which served nineteenth century evangelism so well. There is now, thanks to the Founder of our faith, a way from man to God. And we have to thank him also for showing in detail just what that way to God is.

The Barthian emphasis upon the need of a theocentric theology, as distinguished from the subjective, too humanistic anthropocentrism of the theology of the religious or Christian consciousness from Schleiermacher to the present day, is, thus far, all to the good. Barth objects that Schäfer's "theocentric theology" (*Theozentrische Theologie*, 1914; *Das Geistproblem der Theologie*, 1924) does not differ greatly from that of Schleiermacher and others of the "Christian consciousness" school, so that they are unable to formulate theology as *dogmatics* on the basis of a *Deus dixit*, but must content themselves with a formulation of a "*Glaubens*" *lehre* (doctrine of "faith"), even if that faith is faith in God (Barth, *Die christliche Dogmatik im Entwurf*, pp. 53, 92-93, 96-97, 107. But cf. *The Doctrine of the Word of God*, p. 241). From our point of view, however, theology can and ought to transcend all mere description or normative formulation of the content of faith, as such, and that without falling back into the dogmatism of an externally authoritarian Biblicism, such as Barth's. This may be accomplished partly, as we have seen (Chapter XII), by formulating in an empirically scientific way whatever doctrinal material lends itself to such treatment, and partly, as we shall see (Chapter XXI), by subjecting the content of empirical and normative theology to metaphysical examination and supplementation.

Barth is right in maintaining that a truly theocentric theology requires for its basis an unambiguously objective revelation. I would agree that religion without revelation reduces to something like what Feuerbach said it was, namely, wishful thinking, the cherishing of belief in illusory "wish-beings" (Barth, *The Resurrection of the Dead*, p. 165). But the meaning I would read into this is that if religion were nothing more than framing ideas of the God we like to believe in, and acting under the guidance of those ideas, without ever having anything in experience which could be rightly taken as revelation of divine reality and at least

partial verification of religious faith, then we should be logically defenseless against Feuerbach's charge that our religion was wishful self-deception. According to this empirical interpretation of revelation which I am recommending, it is God, divine Reality, that is revealed, and that revelation is fundamentally the presence of an object or the occurrence of an event within the realm of experience and observation, so that there is never revelation in this fundamental sense without discovery, nor discovery without revelation—though there may be *potential* revelation without its being explicitly discovered or recognized as such. But this is not Barth's idea, according to whose dualistic theory the divine is *Deus absconditus*, naturally inexperienceable and unknowable, revealed only by miracle. Moreover, apart from the "hidden presence" of God in a human life nineteen hundred years ago, revelation as Barth thinks of it comes in a series of propositions, addressed to the believing mind (*The Doctrine of the Word of God*, pp. 150-162). In the empirical view, all such propositions are human formulations, although at their best they are true statements of the meaning of experiential revelations of the divine.

It is in the essentially miraculous supernaturalism of Barth's point of view that we see the consequences of his espousal of an extreme irrationalism for the defense of the dogmatism through which he escapes or seeks to escape the agnosticism implicit in his dualistic theory of knowledge. Rejecting spiritually ideal or absolute values as criteria of the divine, he is left with no criterion of revelation but miracle. But notoriously there is no sure or scientifically acceptable criterion of miracle unless, like Schleiermacher, we are willing to bring any and every event which has revelation-value under the category of miracle. But to adopt this expedient of Schleiermacher's would be not only to argue in a circle; it would be to surrender to subjectivism. Naturally, Barth will have none of it. But, as has been said, having no criterion of revelation but miracle, and no criterion of miracle, he is left in the end with no criterion of revelation. Or, as he would say, no criterion but faith, which he holds to be sufficient unto itself in its supposedly God-given certainty (Cf. *The Doctrine of the Word of God*, pp. 213-216, 224). But this is virtually to say, I believe it because (without reason or empirical verification) I feel sure of it. This is of the essence of dogmatism, and it is no wonder that Barth is well-equipped with a *Dogmatik*. As a theologian who is modern enough to accept the historico-critical method in Biblical study—a method based largely upon doubt as to the historicity of miracle-stories—Barth confesses that in the end all the miracle-stories may go, provided only that the miracle of a God-given faith (in Christ as revelation) be allowed to stand. But here again we are left without any sure or scientifically satisfactory criterion

of miracle. And indeed the difficulty is aggravated in this instance, since faith, psychologically considered, does not even *seem* to be a miracle. In this insistence on the miraculousness of faith alone, we see the dogmatist's last apologetic stand against the agnosticism logically associated with a dualism too uncritically accepted in the beginning.

The extreme irrationalism of Barth's position has been shown not only in the exalted place given to the truncated dialectic of paradox and frustration, and in the way in which, after virtually surrendering to the naturalistic historical critic the historicity of Biblical miracles, he rests the authenticity of the Christian revelation upon the miraculous God-givenness of the faith which reaffirms what historical science is permitted to deny. Another manifestation of the same reaction against rationalism and the rational is to be seen in his thoroughgoing repudiation of all natural theology. The Church, as he sees it, is unanimously of the opinion "that God is never for us in the world, that is to say, in our space and time, except in His Word, and that this Word for us has no other name and content but Jesus Christ, and that Jesus Christ is never to be found on our behalf save each day afresh in the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments" (*Theological Existence Today*, pp. 12-13). Since the revelation in the Scriptures is recognized as the sole norm of our knowledge of God as well as the sole source of our salvation, every attempt to validate a "general revelation" in nature, conscience or history is to be summarily rejected (quoted in Brunner's *Natur und Gnade*, p. 8). When Brunner maintained, in opposition to this view, that it is the task of our theological generation to find the way back to a valid natural theology (*Ibid.*, p. 44), Barth replied with an emphatic No! (*Nein! Antwort an Emil Brunner*, 1933). The image of God in man has been wholly destroyed by sin. "Natural theology can only be becoming to the theology and church of Antichrist. Fed on it the evangelical Church would only sicken and die" (*Ibid.*, p. 63).

In keeping with this uncompromising declaration, but not in very close keeping with the terms of Lord Gifford's will establishing lectureships in Natural Theology viewed as a "strictly natural science," "without reference to or reliance upon any supposed special, exceptional or so-called miraculous revelation," Karl Barth, without relying upon anything but such "so-called miraculous revelation," delivered the Gifford Lectures at the University of Aberdeen in 1937 and 1938, after asserting in his introductory lecture that the science Lord Gifford had in mind "owes its existence to a radical error," and recalling that he had expressly reminded the Senate of the University that he was "an avowed opponent of all natural theology." While holding that "it cannot really be the business of a Reformed theologian to raise so much as his little finger to support this undertaking in any positive way," he consented

to give the lectures, justifying his course in so doing on the ground that it was a service to this false science of Natural Theology to present for its consideration the tenets of its "indispensable opponent," Revealed Theology (*The Knowledge of God and the Service of God*, Hodder and Stoughton, 1938, pp. 3, 5, 6, 7, 9; cf. *The Doctrine of the Word of God*, pp. 147-148, 189-190). In closing the series he made the following remarkable statement: "I believe that there is . . . no important statement in my lectures which the representative of Natural Theology can avoid considering as the direct opposite of his own tenets and therefore of necessity extraordinarily interesting and profitable for his own particular undertaking. I feel, therefore, that I have fulfilled my obligations toward the Gifford Lectures" (*Ibid.*, p. 243).

Barth, like Kierkegaard, would claim that in his theology he is giving expression to "existential thinking," by which term is generally understood thinking into which one puts not his abstract intellect alone, but his whole existence, his feeling-willing self, as well as his reason. But inasmuch as Kierkegaard and Barth distinctly repudiate the project of gaining an objective, rational, universally valid theology or philosophy, but deliberately choose the way of irrationalism and subjectivity, the question arises, by what right they arrogate to their thinking the term "existential." It is not the product of their whole mental life, rationally critical thought as well as feeling and willing, but only of their "irrational" or extra-rational nature, operating intentionally in deliberate dissociation from their critical reason. It is another illustration of the preference of the "either-or" and the horror of the "both-and." If we may have regard for defined meanings of terms, the reactionary irrationalism we have been concerned with in this chapter, systematically ignoring considerations of reason in order to follow the impulses of feeling and will, should be described as abstractly subjective and anti-intellectual, and not, in any proper sense, *existential*.

Paul Tillich's philosophy has been influenced by both Troeltsch and Otto, and in his religious epistemology he is rather close to Otto's neo-Friesian position (*Religiöse Verwirklichung*, 2nd edn., pp. 19, 99; *The Interpretation of History*, Eng. tr., 1936, p. 37; *The Religious Situation*, Eng. tr. by H. R. Niebuhr, 1932, p. 43). A critical idealist with respect to the physical, he calls himself at the same time a "belief-ful realist," with special reference to God (*The Interpretation of History*, p. 60; *The Religious Situation*, p. 53; *Religiöse Verwirklichung*, p. 41). Like most German theology and philosophy, his thought shows the continuing effect of the Kantian dualism, with its agnostic tendency (*The Interpretation of History*, pp. 30, 31; *The Religious Situation*, p. 50); but particularly notable are the marks of Schelling's influence—

the Schelling whose impersonal Absolute Hegel satirized as "the Night in which all cows are black" (*The Interpretation of History*, pp. 31, 35, 61). Such an Absolute comes almost as close to coinciding with Kant's *Ding-an-sich* as does Spencer's "unknowable" "infinite and eternal Energy from which all things proceed." God is variously referred to by Tillich as "the Unconditioned Beyond," "unconditioned power," "unconditioned mystery," "the Unconditioned-Transcendent," "the Absolute," "the Eternal," "the Infinite," "the Abyss of truth" (*Religiöse Verwirklichung*, pp. 15, 81, 84, 95; *The Interpretation of History*, pp. 8, 17, 25, 50).

Along with these philosophical currents of thought Tillich was subjected to a variety of theological influences, among which those of Kähler and the Ritschlians should be mentioned, as well as of Troeltsch and Otto, and somewhat later, Kierkegaard and Barth. He thus felt himself drawn theologically to the Right, philosophically to the Left, the result being that he came to have an uneasy consciousness of occupying "boundary lines" between discrepant positions. He was too independent and able a thinker to become a mere eclectic, but he has continued to magnify the paradoxes of religious and philosophical thought. Too metaphysical to rest satisfied with the Kantian theoretical agnosticism and the anthropocentric theology of the Ritschlians, and too rational or rationalistic to accept Barthian supernaturalism, he has found a way, apparently, of being at one and the same time a rationalistic critic and an irrationalistic believer. He seems to have found a *modus vivendi* for his "belief-ful realism" in the acceptance of many of the ideas of traditional Christianity which conflict with his impersonalistic absolutism, as being necessary myths, even while he recognizes the danger to religion in such a course (*Religiöse Verwirklichung*, pp. 20, 41, 46, 60, 67, 68, 81, 88, 89, 96, 99, 102, 103; *The Religious Situation*, pp. 9, 36, 53; *The Interpretation of History*, pp. 3, 14, 15, 26, 32, 33, 34, 39, 63). The irrationalistic tendency seems to have been accentuated by his experiences in the World War and by the turn of fate by which he was forced to become an exile. He has come to be very conscious of the demonic element in reality (*Religiöse Verwirklichung*, p. 43; *The Interpretation of History*, pp. 36, 37, 58, 70). We find at once a confession of the felt unsatisfactoriness of his religious philosophy and evidence of a religiously motivated hope, however despairingly cherished, in a remarkable passage in the *Religiöse Verwirklichung*, in which he agrees that it would be the highest goal of a theological task to reach the place where reality itself speaks *unsymbolically*, both concerning itself and about the Unconditioned, where the contrast between reality and symbol is finally overcome. This would be a fulfilment of the deepest demand of the religious consciousness. But for the actual realization of the

desire for unmythical speech concerning the Unconditioned-transcendent, we must, according to Tillich, wait in religious faith for an eschatological revelation. Such an objective cannot possibly be realized, he holds, under present conditions (*Op. cit.*, p. 108. Cf. Reinhold Niebuhr, "The Truth in Myths," in *The Nature of Religious Experience*, Harpers, 1937, pp. 117-135; D. C. Macintosh, "Is Theology Reducible to Mythology?" in *The Review of Religion*, Jan., 1940. Cf. also discussion in the March and May numbers of the same periodical).

Karl Heim's religious epistemology is a Kantian or even ultra-Kantian dualism. The forms of our experience make God imperceptible; our categories cannot take him in; we are by nature God-blind. Miraculous revelation aside, God is the Great Unknown, and absolutely unknowable. He is inapprehensible, unimaginable, inconceivable, wholly other, something absolutely impossible (*God Transcendent*, Eng. tr., Nisbet, 1935, pp. 187, 195, 203-204, 207, 213-214, 226). Most of the time, it would seem, "demoniacal will-powers . . . hold sway throughout the world," since it is by miraculous events that God's victories are marked. The Christian hope is centered in a literal Second Coming of Christ (*The New Divine Order*, Eng. tr., S. C. M., 1930, pp. 45, 50, 88, 90; *Jesus, der Weltvollender*, 1937; cf. P. Althaus, *Die letzte Dinge*, 3rd edn., 1926; *Dogmatik*, 2nd edn., 1936).

Gustav Aulén and Anders Nygren are leaders of the new Swedish school of theology. Aulén cannot find and obviously does not want to find a rational solution of the problems of theology. Not only is God represented as waging continuous warfare with a literal and seemingly all but omnipotent devil; God is or has been, it would seem, in internal strife and conflict. There is a fundamental "tension between the Divine Love and the Divine Wrath." They do not come to terms; they simply compete, irrationally, as it were, until finally "the Divine Love prevails over the Divine Wrath." Infinite Love, acting "*contra rationem et legem*," justifies men without any satisfaction of the Divine justice," and every attempt at a rational explanation of the transaction is "bound to fail." For Aulén, as for Luther, "*Deus revelatus* is at the same time *Deus absconditus*" (*Christus Victor*, Eng. tr., S. P. C. K., 1931, pp. 164, 166, 171-173).

No doubt so convinced a partisan of irrationalism in theology would not thank us for pointing out that there is a rational and ethical justification for God's gracious forgiveness of the repentant, but there is such a moral justification of God's forgiving grace—and grace it is, even if it has its necessary moral conditions. Primarily the justification of Divine forgiveness rests on the radical change of will involved in the repentant faith of the regenerate, even though in character the penitent

is still of necessity very far from being what he is on the way to becoming. Ultimately the justification of God's reconciliation with those who were formerly in rebellion against his will is to be found in the anticipated progressive satisfaction of the righteous will of God, which takes place as God and the reconciled individual proceed to cooperate for the destruction of evil in the individual himself and as far as possible in the world.

Nygren, in his *Agape and Eros*, does well to stress the element of spontaneous graciousness in the Divine Love; but when he adds that it is "vain to look for a cause or explanation of God's love in the worthiness of the men whom he loves," that the Divine Love is indifferent to human merit, and that man is in himself without value and acquires such value as he has from the mere fact that God, for no reason at all, loves him (*Op. cit.*, Pt. I, S. P. C. K., 1932, pp. 52-54; cf. Pt. II, S. P. C. K., 1938, 1939, pp. 519, 522), he is giving expression to views which are at best but dangerously misleading half-truths. It is not enough to see that God loves sinful man, even him who is still impenitent. It would be nothing to the credit of God's wisdom or character if he loved man either because of man's sin or for no reason at all. The love of a God who is both wise and good, for man who is neither, must be because of man's *potential* value, and in spite of his present sin and relative worthlessness. Otherwise, on Nygren's principle, the supreme illustration of the Divine *Agape* would consist in love for the absolutely and incurably evil being, the devil!

It is, however, a defensible and essentially Christian view that man's real worth, potential and actual, he owes, fundamentally and finally, to the initiative and grace of God (Cf. Oliver C. Quick, *Doctrines of the Creed*, Scribners, 1938, p. 55). But this must not be interpreted in such a way as to deny all efficacy to the initiative and activity of man himself as a free agent, a created creator.

The Swedish theologians are to be commended for their emphasis upon the love of God. At this point their system is in pleasant contrast with the Barthian dogma of God as "wholly other." Apart from this difference, however, they are with almost equal appropriateness classed under reactionary irrationalism. And in general, the obvious failure of extreme rationalism to give a complete account of reality affords no warrant for swinging to the opposite extreme. (For further details see W. M. Horton, *Contemporary Continental Theology*, Harpers, 1938, pp. 148-168, and N. F. S. Ferré, *Swedish Contributions to Modern Theology*, Harpers, 1939.)

It would be obviously unfair to classify Nicolas Berdyaev, the Russian exile and lay theologian, as a religious reactionary in the ordinary

sense of the word. In his various works there is much that is original, profound and fruitfully suggestive, and that not least in his penetrating criticisms of extreme rationalism and rationalistic liberalism. It is not difficult, however, to show that as against the rational and rationally ethical emphasis in modern theology he has reacted fundamentally and far toward the opposite extreme.

As against positive theology in general, with its endeavor to gain clearness and distinctness of ideas in religion, Berdyaev favors the negative theology of the extreme mystics (*The Destiny of Man*, Eng. tr., Scribners, 1937, Part I, Ch. II; cf. H. Bergson, *The Two Sources of Morality and Religion*, passim). From this point of view, as in Boehme's mystical theology, Being, divine as well as human, has originated out of Non-Being, the Ungrund, or primal nothingness. "Out of the Divine Nothing . . . God the Creator was born" (*The Destiny of Man*, p. 33). God the Creator and man the creature are both derived from an original uncreated freedom, paradoxically thought of as at once essentially non-being ("meonic") and yet as somehow existent and standing in some sort of causal relation to all being (*Ibid.*, Part I, Ch. II; *Freedom and the Spirit*, Eng. tr., Scribners, 1935, p. 166). Out of this original freedom or nothing God created the world (*The Destiny of Man*, p. 33). In God and in man, then, "freedom is uncreated and has its roots in non-being" (*Ibid.*, p. 45). "Freedom is prior to being" (*Ibid.*, p. 39). In so far as man is free, he is uncaused; "freedom means absence of cause" (*Spirit and Reality*, Eng. tr., G. Bles, 1939, p. 113). Thus Berdyaev chooses the irrationalistic, indeterministic horn of the supposed dilemma of either predeterminism or indeterminism (i.e., causelessness); he fails to consider the conception of creative self-determination at the time (Cf. my article, "Responsibility, Freedom and Causality; or, the Dilemma of Determinism or Indeterminism," *The Journal of Philosophy*, XXXVII, 1940, pp. 42-51).*

With this irrationalistic notion of freedom, Berdyaev proceeds to deal with the problem of evil. "Without theodicy," he extravagantly asserts, "there can be no ethics" (*The Destiny of Man*, p. 31). His irrationalism is thus of a less timorous type than that of Jaspers, according to whom the attempt to solve the problem of evil is "ungodly" (v. J. S. Bixler, "The Contribution of *Existenz-Philosophie*," *Harvard Theological Review*, XXXIII, 1940, p. 63). According to Berdyaev, "evil has no cause" (*Spirit and Reality*, p. 113). Indeed, "evil is non-being." "Evil is evil

* We all have a perceptual intuition of our free agency, and we ought to have the courage to derive the category of creative causality directly from this perceptual intuition, instead of miserably seeking to satisfy the requirements of the moral consciousness in terms of the mechanistic categories which Kant, obsessed with the Newtonian mechanistic physics, set forth as the apriori elements involved in the cognition of a mere thing.

. . . because it is non-being" (*Freedom and the Spirit*, pp. 163, 183). And yet, non-being as it is, evil has reality enough to be "the motive-force behind the life of the universe" (*Ibid.*, p. 185). And while it is declared that evil has no cause, it is also asserted that man is responsible for it (*The Destiny of Man*, p. 35). Perhaps we should accept as a sufficient excuse for these contradictions, especially as coming from an avowed irrationalist, the plea that "evil cannot be interpreted conceptionally" (*Spirit and Reality*, p. 115).

When Berdyaev comes to deal with ethical matters, the consequences of his irrationalism begin to look serious. "Moral distinctions are the result of the Fall," it is asserted (*The Destiny of Man*, p. 47). The categories of good and evil were "engendered by the Fall" (*Ibid.*, p. 53). Thus "man's responsibility for the Fall exalts him" (*Ibid.*, p. 35). The moral situation and moral consciousness are transitional and not essential to man. The ideal is beyond both good and evil; it is not a triumph of goodness, but a cessation of care, a state of aesthetic creativeness (*Ibid.*, Part III, Ch. III, esp. p. 364). The ethics of reverence for the moral law is set down as the lowest level of morality, and destined to be superseded (*Ibid.*, Part II, Chs. I-III). A final victory over evil is not to be gained by converting the wicked to goodness, but only by getting beyond both good and evil (*Ibid.*, pp. 364, 371; *Spirit and Reality*, p. 123). "The most complete victory over evil comes through the conviction of its emptiness and vanity—in a word, of its non-being" (*Freedom and the Spirit*, p. 183). Berdyaev finds the ideal of a kingdom of the good and goodness "repellent" (*The Destiny of Man*, p. 371), and goes so far as to utter a warning against the danger involved in the love of goodness (*Solitude and Society*, Scribners, 1938, p. 196).

The consequences for theology are equally serious. Not only are we warned that any attempt to gain a reasonable interpretation of "the mystery of Christ, the God-man" will make it "meaningless" (*Destiny of Man*, p. 46). The Divine Being, it is declared, "is beyond good and evil" (*Ibid.*, pp. 53, 56). "God is not bound by the moral good." "It is equally wrong to say that God is bound to will the good, and that the good is that which God wills" (*Ibid.*, p. 56). "The Kingdom of God cannot be conceived in moral terms" (*Ibid.*, p. 47). Berdyaev's God, like that of the extreme mystics, being neither good nor evil, but beyond all such valuations and distinctions (*Ibid.*), seems to be envisaged as a sort of "higher synthesis" of God and the devil! But the synthesis is not really higher, but immeasurably lower, unless non-moral impersonality be higher than moral personality.

Berdyaev is still rational (logical) enough to draw from the indicated irrationalistic doctrines, as premises, some consistent conclusions for the philosophy of history and for eschatology. The tragedy of history is not

to be resolved in time, but only in eternity (*The Meaning of History*, Scribners, 1936, p. 206). The doctrine of progress, by which Berdyaev seems to mean not exclusively or mainly the now generally abandoned optimistic belief in automatic evolutionary progress for the human race, but rather any mere cherishing of the ideal of progress with the hope that it may prove to be conditionally possible of realization—this “doctrine of progress” is denounced as “an illegitimate deification of the future” and wholly without justification (*Ibid.*, p. 187). (By an almost inexcusable misdescription the “religion of progress” is charged with regarding all past generations and epochs as “devoid of intrinsic value.” *Ibid.*, p. 189). The only possible solution of the problems involved in universal history Berdyaev would have us seek in terms of a sort of sublimated, mystical eschatology; in other words, he would have us look not for a progressive victory over evil in time, but for a “victory over time” (*Ibid.*, p. 190). “The Kingdom of God cannot exist in time,” he declares (*The Destiny of Man*, p. 367). It is possible only in eternity, and its realization in “paradise” is “not the triumph of ‘the good’ ” (*Ibid.*, p. 364).

There can be no doubt but that religion today is in great need of a theology other than the stereotyped positive theology of traditionalism and other than the rationalistically depotentiated liberalism so widely prevalent in modern religious circles. But what we need is not to be found in the irrationalistic and mystically negative theology of a Berdyaev, any more than in the reactionary supernaturalism of a Heim, or in the very modernistic irrationalism and mythologizing conservatism of a Tillich, or in any other of the well-meaning, more or less irrationalistic, more or less reactionary theologies examined in this chapter. The true *via media* between the extremes of positive and negative, of rationalistic and irrationalistic, will be found in a theology at once empirical and evangelical, a theology of verified religious knowledge and tested religious faith, a theology not only rational and ethical, but vitally religious.

PART III (*Continued*)

CRITICAL MONISTIC REALISM IN RELIGION



Chapter XX

NORMATIVE THEOLOGY

We return now to our constructive statement. In Part III (Chapters XI-XII) above we defended a point of view which it seemed fair to designate as critical monistic realism in religious epistemology, a view according to which, as it seemed to us, it might be maintained that there exists a divinely functioning reality not dependent for its existence upon our awareness of it, but directly apprehensible by us as operating within the field of our observation, and especially in experimental religion at its best, that is, in the various phases of the ethico-religious experience of salvation, or deliverance from evil and attainment of good, on condition of maintaining an attitude which we described and designated the right religious adjustment.

From the point of view of this critical monistic realism in religious epistemology, we maintained, it is possible to formulate certain empirical theological laws, embodying verified religious knowledge concerning divine processes, effects of a divinely functioning reality, or factor. This reality, or factor, it was maintained, is the object of fundamental interest in practical religion, and may well be called God, provided it be understood that in using this term we mean to claim nothing more in the way of knowledge in the strictly scientific sense in the religious realm than is to be found in those same empirical theological laws.

It will be recalled that according to our definition of critical monistic realism in religion, while there is a partial identity between the immediately experienced and the independently real in the religious realm, there is also a partial and presumably extensive duality between what is experienced of the divine reality and what remains beyond the bounds of what is presented, revealed, within our immediate religious experience. Such persistently transcendent phases of divine reality, being obviously beyond the limits of empirical religious knowledge, can become for us no more than objects of religious (imaginal) intuition and faith, subjectively assured and objectively reasonable at best. "Is the way of knowledge adequate in religious matters," asks a recent writer on the philosophy of religion (E. A. Burtt, *Types of Religious Philosophy*,

Harpers, 1939, p. 498), "or does it need to be supplemented by the way of faith?" Our answer would be unhesitatingly to the effect that our strictly limited religious knowledge does need to be supplemented, if possible, by a reasonably tenable faith. As we envisage the situation, it is now our task to examine into the possibility and conditions of attaining to such subjectively assured and critically reasonable faith with reference to the transcendent phases of the religious object perceptually apprehended by us as a dependable, divinely functioning reality. In undertaking this task we shall be interested in conserving to the utmost "whatsoever things are true" in the theology which has functioned vitally in the traditional, evangelical Christian faith. In our determination to this end we refuse to yield place to the theologians of crisis; we must decline, however, to take irrationality or unresolvable paradox as being in itself a criterion of truth. On the contrary, we would maintain that in religion as in other phases of life, reasonableness is a safer guide to truth than its opposite.

In our discussion of religious perception and the empirical theology based thereupon, we took the position not only that there was nothing to prevent theology from being at the same time existential and valuational, but that empirical theology at least could not well be either without being the other also. Valid perception is cognitive experience of existing reality, and valid religious perception is cognitive experience of divinely functioning existent reality, and necessarily involves as such the use of some definite criterion or criteria as to what value or values deserve to be designated "divine" (*Cf.* "Theology, Valuational or Existential?", *Review of Religion*, Nov., 1939). We now go on to make the obvious but far-reaching statement that whatever value or values serve as a valid criterion or criteria of the divine as perceived and known may be reasonably taken as applicable also to the divine as transcendent and only believed in. No statement can be accepted as true of any *divine* transcendent reality which would be incompatible with the character connoted by the term "divine" as we have used it in connection with the data of religious perception. In other words, whatever transcendent divine reality there may be must be, in quality or function or both, such as would merit the adjective "divine," used in the valuational sense in which we have been consistently using that term. If any transcendent reality have not that quality or value, it is not a divine reality. Conversely, whatever transcendent reality has in its being and functioning that divine quality is to that same extent and in the same sense a divine reality. This means that in the absolute or ideal spiritual values, and in absolute ethical values particularly, we have a norm for the criticism of all intuitions and doctrinal beliefs as to the character and activities which can be consistently ascribed to a transcendent divine reality.

But if we are to have a normative theology of a transcendent divine reality, it will not be enough that we have a norm for criticizing religious intuition, or faith; there must be the religious intuition, or faith, to which the norm is to be applied. We have already seen that religious perception includes perceptual intuition of a divinely functioning cause, and that a realistic interpretation of this cause, such as is involved in our critical monistic realism, may reasonably be maintained. But imaginal intuition goes farther and asserts the integrated unity and consistency of the divine as transcendent and only imaginally intuited with the divine as immanent, perceptually intuited, and empirically revealed. Furthermore, apprehending this divinely functioning reality, transcendent and immanent, as one, and as causally operating, in view of the divineness of the dependable result of the right religious adjustment, religious intuition goes on to affirm the purposiveness of the divine causality. The result is as if it were divinely intended, and it is an intuition of religious faith that it is thus intended. Involved in this intuition and conception of divine purpose, or intention, is all that is most fundamental and essential in the idea of mind, personality, or spirit; and indeed, more fully expressed, the religious intuition to which we have referred is that the transcendently existing, partially revealed, divine reality is essentially personal. That is, it is conscious, intelligent, and purposively active. This imaginal intuition is not, of course, an adequate basis for the claim that God is *known* to be a person; but it is an actual basis for a faith to that effect.

Now it is important to observe that in the divine value of the spiritual processes dependably promoted in human experience by the divinely functioning reality on condition of the right religious adjustment we are in possession of a norm by which to measure all that is claimed to be divine, whether immanently and open to direct inspection or transcendently and such as can only be affirmed in faith. More specifically, whatever is permissibly affirmed about the character or activity of the divine reality in its transcendence must be fully compatible with the verified fact that the divinely functioning cause dependably responds to the right sort of prayer, regenerates individuals and groups on condition of a sufficiently persistent and comprehensive right religious adjustment, develops good character in them as this comprehensive right religious adjustment is made intensive and continuing, tends also under similar conditions to guide the religiously surrendered will to right decisions and actions, and to promote certain spiritually desirable feelings and sentiments, such as sensitiveness to sin, the peace of reconciliation and religious assurance, and unselfish love to God and man. The God, or divinely functioning reality, who does this for man is a morally redemptive God, man's ethical Savior and Friend. All that is asserted in religious

intuition, or faith, must be made conformable to this empirically founded, ethical norm. Thus we are furnished with a norm for the criticism and construction of a normative intuitional theology, or theology of faith. According to this normative theology, the transcendent God of faith has the same qualities of character as are dependably promoted in man through persistence in what we have called the right religious adjustment.

On this normative intuitional foundation certain important structures of faith may be logically constructed. The resultant view of God, transcendent as well as immanent, is of a being who, whatever may or may not be his power, is, at least so far as his character is concerned, a worthy object of human love, devotion, and trust. Indeed our norm interposes no objection to the by no means rare intuitive faith that God is absolutely trustworthy and worshipful in character, an ethically perfect being to whom we may appropriately make an absolute surrender of our wills and active lives. In other words, God is holy Love; so far as considerations of character are concerned, the God man needs exists.

Furthermore, from the point of view of this normative theology of religious intuition or faith, we may go over all the formulated laws of empirical theology and substitute for the not specifically personal term "divinely functioning reality" the essentially personal term of traditional theology and faith, namely, "the Holy Spirit." The statements will then be to the effect that the Holy Spirit, God as essentially personal and operating in religious experience, answers true prayer, regenerates on condition of repentance and faith, or the right religious adjustment, gives conviction of sin, peace, assurance and guidance, and promotes a truly desirable development of character.

Moreover, religious intuition turns round upon itself and interprets itself as the work of this same divinely functioning reality which is now viewed as God, the Holy Spirit. Not only the empirical manifestation of the work of a divinely functioning reality, giving verified knowledge of the same, is now interpreted as revelation; the subjectively certain imaginal intuition is itself intuited imaginally as revelation in the sense of divine illumination and guidance into truth. In other words, faith is itself intuited as being "the gift of God" (Cf. Eph. 2:8). And by the canons of our normative theology this intuition, in so far as it does not conflict with anything we have good reason to believe to be true, may be allowed to stand.

In saying this, however, we are not necessarily endorsing the view that either the revelation or the faith is miraculous in nature. The point is one for consideration in metaphysical theology. Furthermore, in affirming the intuitive conviction that God is to be thanked for the emergence in us of this intuitive faith in him, we must not assume that man as a

free agent has no responsibility for the exercise of religious faith. The fact is that at two points man's free activity, responding to the divine initiative, is called for. In the first place, man must freely enter, as fully as he conscientiously can, into the right religious adjustment. When he does so, and when he begins perceptibly to reap the experiential benefits which tend dependably to follow, there will tend to emerge within his consciousness an imaginal intuition to the effect that the God we imperatively need actually exists, a God supremely trustworthy and worshipful, fully adequate in character for all our religious needs. We are not claiming, of course, that this can be *inferred* with logical necessity. While permissible enough logically, it follows (or tends to follow) *psychologically*, not logically. That this tendency, in accord with psychological law, to intuit that the God we imperatively need actually exists, is the result of the operation of God in us, we may refer for further consideration to metaphysical theology, as we must do with the whole question of the relation of the divine causality to natural and psychological law in general. What we are concerned with here, as the second point at which man's free participation in the genesis of faith is called for, is the need for man to affirm, as fully as he critically and conscientiously can, in thought and also in life, the truth of the religious intuition which has thus emerged in connection with his empirical knowledge. In this way he transforms what might otherwise be a mere passing intuition into an abiding faith.

Interpreting faith, then, as the *vital* affirmation of the intuition naturally suggested by favorable religious experience, we are able to emphasize man's responsibility for its exercise and at the same time agree with Paul and Calvin and Barth that faith is not wholly and consciously "of ourselves," but may very well be, in its intuitional foundation, the gracious "gift of God." But this does not mean that we can do nothing to condition the emergence of the intuitional element in our faith. Our part is to keep responding, as far as we can do so with intellectual honesty, to the values and to the value-producing reality which we can appreciate as divine, that is, as worthy of our absolute devotion and self-giving trust.

As I write, I recall a typical instance of this conditioning of the Christian religious intuition. A sceptically inclined humanist consented, on conscientiously ethical grounds, to make a whole-hearted surrender of his life to the "four standards" emphasized by the Oxford Group (absolute honesty, absolute purity, absolute unselfishness, absolute love), interpreting them as what the will of a worshipful, trustworthy God would be, if there were such a God. He kept responding, not uncritically and while not perfectly, we may be sure, still with honest sincerity of purpose, to the Christian intuitions which emerged in connection with his growing

religious experience and knowledge. Today he is a theist and a minister of the Christian gospel, the useful pastor of a Christian church.

The essentially similar experience of the late Lady Henry Somerset is well known. She came into full Christian faith and assurance by acting upon the suggestion which arose in her mind intuitively in the midst of her religious doubts and perplexities, as if it were the word of God addressed to her: "Act as if I were, and thou shalt know that I am!" This formula, which might almost be taken as a religious "rule of thumb," is in fact simply a more popular and less technical way of saying what we undertook to formulate (in Ch. XII above) as the empirical theological law of religious assurance.

Incidentally, too, we see at this point how really intimately empirical theology and normative theology are related to each other. In formulating its generalizations as laws, empirical theology, like any other descriptive science, assumes that under like conditions the future will be like the past. How different is this from the intuitive certitude that the transcendental attributes of any independently existing causal factor, divine or other, cannot be incompatible with its attributes as immanent and revealed? And how different is this latter in turn from the principle we have suggested for guidance in the construction of a normative theology of religious faith, namely, "that whatever value or values serve as a valid criterion of the divine as perceived and known may be reasonably taken as applicable to the divine as transcendent and only believed in"? The divine in the realm of "presentational immediacy" not only *reveals* the divine in the realm of "causal efficacy," but has "symbolic reference" to still further reaches of the divine reality (Cf. A. N. Whitehead, *Symbolism, Its Meaning and Effect*, Macmillan, 1927, p. 18 *et passim*).

In the history of religious intuition and tradition various terms and titles have been applied to God, with more or less appropriateness and poetical or literal truth. Thus he has been commonly addressed and referred to as King, Lord, Sovereign, Judge, Guide, Guard, Father, and Friend, as well as in many other terms still more obviously metaphorical. Up to the present we have been developing the content of normative theology only in relation to the ethical character of God, and not with regard to such considerations as those of knowledge or power; but within the limits indicated something can be done to distinguish between that in the metaphor or symbol which can and that which cannot be taken as literally true of the God of a critically normative ethico-religious faith. For instance, in comparison with the moral perfection of the divine "Judge" sinful man must stand condemned; as the God of holy love, his will for us and for the world must be such that he is our rightful moral sovereign, in allegiance and full self-surrender to whom is to be found our perfect freedom; and whatever his genetic relationship to us—a point

for consideration in metaphysical theology—as the God of perfect righteousness and love his attitude toward finite persons must be perfectly fatherly, at once rigidly moral and infinitely gracious (Cf. “Is Theology Reducible to Mythology?”, *Review of Religion*, Jan., 1940). This is no mere dogmatic expression of imaginal intuition; it is part of the content of a critically normative theology of religious faith.

The valuational norm which we have derived from ethico-religious empirical theology and propose for application to faith which has to do with the transcendent aspects of deity may be expected to exclude certain items of religious belief which might otherwise find a place in a theology founded on imaginal intuition. For example, if moral perfection is to be normative for our idea of God's character, any divine predestination to moral evil or purely arbitrary election and reprobation must be ruled out; a morally perfect God would not be willing that any should ultimately perish. Neither could our normative theology admit any such partiality in God as would, apart from any essential difference in the instances, work a miracle to help one individual and decline to do the same for another. Furthermore, by using the same moral valuational norm we can take another step and deny that the disasters to human values which often come through the orderly operation of the habitual processes of nature are to be interpreted as being in themselves the expression of the creative will of God at the time. That there should be a dependable realm of nature may be according to the will of a morally perfect God of love, and the same religious interpretation may be put upon the fact that no miraculous intervention takes place to change natural processes so as to prevent disaster to ill-adjusted lives, animal or human; but to recognize that such natural evils are permitted is not to say that as individual occurrences they are positively willed and intentionally brought into existence by divine fiat. Thus far we can go within the limits of normative theology; the further working out of doctrine on this point calls for a metaphysical development of theology.

Our valuational norm has many possible applications of a positive nature, as well as such negative applications as we have noted. In so far as sovereignty is to be attributed to God, it must be a perfectly just sovereignty, and that will be one which would choose that there should be some degree of responsible freedom for each individual, with opportunity adequate to make life worth living; that there should be unending existence for every personal life that would make good use of the privilege; that sin should be judged and dealt with in perfect righteousness, but that provision should be made for deliverance from sin and its evil consequences without depriving man of his moral freedom; and that sin-

cere repentance on the part of sinful man should meet with gracious divine forgiveness.

A normative theology of this sort would be, of course, existential; its propositions would be statements of criticized intuition concerning transcendent aspects of existent Deity. But in view of the norm or norms employed in the criticism and construction of the content of faith, the theology is just as obviously valuational. It is both existential and valuational; it does not have to cease to be the one in order to be the other. And that it is valuational does not mean that it thereby ceases to be theocentric. As theological formulation of faith, it is theocentric; its propositions are statements about God. But this is not to say that as theocentric and in so far as it deals with the permanently transcendent, it can amount to *knowledge*. There can be scientific knowledge of God as immanent and revealed, as we saw when we treated of empirical theology. And there can be a normative theocentric theology, dealing with God as transcendent, yet this must remain of the nature of faith; it can never, under present conditions, attain to the status of fully verified knowledge. If, however, what we want is to systematize statements about the permanently transcendent aspects of Deity and yet to remain within the limits of the strictly scientific as well as normative, the best we can do is to formulate a merely *anthropocentric* normative science, namely, a normative science not of divine reality but of religious faith.

In all this discussion of a normative and valuational theology we have said nothing of religious pragmatism and the will to believe. This is because the primary fact about the man of religious intuition and faith is not so much that he wills to believe as that he actually does believe. It is only secondarily, if at all, that it occurs to him that the doctrinal content of his belief is true because it works; he is convinced that it is true, and so he works with it, and is more or less successful in making it work. Normally, faith is more a matter of feeling sure than of tentative experiment. It seems more like a donation, something "born from above," than a labored human achievement. But, having guarded myself thus far against misunderstanding, I must go on to admit that no such subjective certitude of imaginal intuition should be taken as infallible; it is properly subject to thoughtful criticism in the light of practice and consequent perception. This is a process in which not infrequently something of the certitude is at least temporarily lost, so that the problem now comes to be the complicated one of retaining or regaining certitude and conserving vital religious values while honestly seeking and facing the truth. In this situation there is an indispensable place for deliberate volition, but not as an attempt to act as if one believed what in fact he disbelieves. What is needed is that he act decisively and wholeheartedly on what positive faith and religious intuition he already has. If he does this, new

intuitions will arise, new action will become honestly possible, new truth will be discovered, and the new or renewed religious certitude accompanying the experience will probably contain more of objective certainty than was enjoyed before.

It is not meant to deny that the will has a rightful place in the life of faith. It has such a place, not to close the mind to relevant truth, but for the reaffirming of those vital and practically significant religious intuitions which stand the test of experience and honest thought, and for faithful perseverance in the way of life that accords with our honest religious conviction. In this sense there is a "right to believe" before, during, and after even so drastic a critical examination of the content of religious intuition and faith as may be involved in theological metaphysics and the working out of a metaphysical theology.

In all that we have said here of a normative theocentric theology, we have not mentioned either the historic Jesus or the theological Christ. Up to the point at which we have arrived this omission has been intentional. It has been our aim to discover or show how much of a vital theology of faith, and indeed of essentially Christian faith in God, is logically and psychologically possible for the person who has been led, whether rightly or wrongly, to doubt the essential historicity of the Jesus Christ of Christian tradition and faith. As for the making of the dogma of the deity or divinity of Christ central and fundamental in theology while denying the essential historicity of Jesus, I will have nothing to do with so insecure a position and so illogical a development of doctrine. The position I would be concerned to defend in this connection involves three distinct theses. In the first place, the essentially Christian type of religion and theology is logically defensible, apart from any dependence upon the outcome of historical investigation of the historicity of the Jesus of Christian tradition. Some indication of the evidence for this statement has already been offered in the foregoing part of this chapter. In the second place, the essentially Christian type of religious experience and faith did not arise historically and would not have arisen at the time it did, independently of the centrality of the actual historic Jesus. His historicity is indispensable to the historian who is looking for a reasonably tenable explanation of the genesis of Christianity. The adequate defense of this proposition is a matter for the historian to undertake, and it will not be attempted here. In the third place, from the point of view of the history and psychology of Christian faith, and apart altogether from the question of what might be logically possible if we had to give up the essential historicity of Jesus, it remains true that in being able reasonably to believe in the essential historicity of the Jesus of Christian tradition there is for Christian faith and for Christian evangelism and Christian education

so great an advantage, psychologically speaking, that while it may be misrepresented it can hardly be exaggerated. This psychological advantage is reflected, too, in spite of what we have already said, in the realm of normative theology, and for that reason we shall now seek to supplement what has been said about a valuational normative theology derived from the results of empirical theology, by turning to a brief consideration of the main features of a Christocentric normative theology. Just what we have meant by the expression "*essential* historicity of Jesus" will become clearer as we proceed.

In character and spirit, in attitude toward God and man, in the spiritual quality of his personality and in the inspiring and redemptive function of what he did and suffered for others, Jesus of Nazareth represented, we may well believe, not only humanity at its best, but the highest individual embodiment in history of those absolute values or spiritual ideals which we have designated as divine. This religious value-judgment expresses intuitive religious appreciation, but the immediate impression of divineness (numinousness as well as ideal spiritual quality) is confirmed by perception of the divinely saving function he exercises in the experiences and lives of those who respond wholeheartedly to the religious, moral and social meaning of that historic personality and life. As Herrmann points out, we can discern, in connection with that historic life, a power which enabled him to triumph spiritually in spite of all that was done to him and which we can appropriately evaluate as divine. In what he was, did and suffered, and in what he accomplished and can accomplish for the salvation of humanity, he was a revelation of God; in his person and in his work, in his life and in his death, "truly this was the Son of God."

We are interested here not simply in the theological doctrines of the divine person and saving work of the historic Jesus Christ. We are particularly concerned to set forth the normative value of the revelation of God in Christ in the work of theological construction. In one sense the most important and saving revelation of God for any one is his revelation in the life and experience of that individual himself; all other revelation, even that in Jesus of Nazareth, is, however full and great, for everyone else revelation at second hand. But from the point of view of its significance for the race and for religious thought, there is no revelation to compare with that which we find in the historic Jesus as the Son of God, or Christ of faith. In his divinely holy and loving spirit we find our best and only satisfying norm of the divine as immanent in the human and as also "in Heaven," in the realm of reality which transcends the scene of our earthly experience.

The relationship is close between the divine in the historic Jesus and the divine in the spiritual religious experience on which our empirical theology was based and which suggested the norm for our valuational

normative theology. Whatever Jesus without his religious faith and experience might have been, he could not have become the supreme revealer of God nor the Savior of the world. Beyond all that he was by inheritance and training apart from religious experience, his unique attainment in the way of divineness and achievement in the way of saviorhood he owed not only to the impartially bestowed divine initiative, but to the dependable divine response to the right religious adjustment which we may well believe was habitual with him. His divinity was at once a divine donation and a religious achievement.

The theological significance of the divineness, divinity, or revelation-value of the historic Jesus consists in the normative value of the Christlike as a clew to the character, will, and attitude of the necessarily so largely transcendent God. To employ this idea of the Christlike as a norm for the criticism of all intuitive faith in God is to make use of what is known as the Christocentric principle. A Christocentric theology in the sense in which we are now using the term is not necessarily one which centers attention chiefly on the doctrines of Christology. A Christocentric normative theology should be theocentric in content; it is in approach or method that it is Christocentric. In other words, while centrally interested in doctrines as to the nature, character and activities of God, it is committed to the use of the Christlike as a norm for the testing of all the affirmations of theology proper.

From this point of view we find confirmation of the results indicated above as following from the use of the more general valuational norm. The God revealed in Christ would not predestinate any human being helplessly to everlasting torment. A Christlike God must be believed to will the continued existence of every person of essentially good will, and of every person whose will would probably become essentially good with further opportunity for choice, experience, and participation in the grace of God. A Christlike God must be, like Christ, "the Hope of every contrite heart," a God ever ready to forgive and be reconciled to those who sincerely repent of their sins. And so we might go on through the whole round of the doctrines of faith, in so far as they have to do with the character of God and the expression of that character in relation to men. The Christlike God would be holy and loving, righteous and gracious, just and merciful. Metaphorically speaking, he is "our Father who is in heaven."

This brings us to the vitally religious kernel of the doctrine of the Trinity. Empirical theology embodied our verified knowledge of an immanent divinely functioning reality which faith intuitively as "God, the Holy Spirit." A Christocentric normative theology assumes the divine historic Son as revelation of the fatherly transcendent God. And yet God is, under

all aspects, one God, who, in character and attitude at least, is the God humanity needs.

Here again religious intuition is primary, the application of the norm secondary, and the voluntary affirmation of the faith something which may have a rightful place before, during, and after the intellectual, more or less metaphysical examination of the theoretical permissibility of the faith.

There is one very serious lack in what we have been able to assert about God and to present as confirmed either by the valuational norm derived from empirical theology, or by the Christocentric principle, or by both. Proceeding thus we were led to the idea of the God who, at least so far as character is concerned, is the God we need, a God good enough for our absolute worship and trust. But is God also the God we need, so far as his knowledge and power are concerned? Is he great enough for our absolute trust? This is a question which a purely valuational or Christocentric norm does not enable us to answer.

In order to answer this question, not on the basis of either mere external authority or mere dubious metaphysical speculation, but on a basis inwardly assured as well as objectively defensible, we must fall back upon religious intuition. There is such a religious intuition, participated in by the historic Jesus as by many another, but not logically necessitated by the Christocentric principle as we have defined it, for the reason that it was not *fully* verified in the life of Jesus from birth to crucifixion. I refer, of course, to the by no means rare imaginal intuition and subjective certitude that the God who exists is from every point of view the God we need, a God not only good enough but also great enough to be the object of our absolute self-commitment and trust. This intuition, that God is great enough in power and wisdom or knowledge, may well be incorporated, along with the Christocentric principle and the practically equivalent norm for the divine as transcendent which we derived from the divine as immanent and experienced, in one comprehensive normative principle, to the effect that the God we need exists, a God great enough and good enough for our absolute trust. This is not verified knowledge; stated in minimum terms, it is for some a subjective certitude, and so far as we have seen, a theoretical possibility, a not yet discredited intuition, a faith which may possibly stand up under all legitimate tests of its probable truth, as being still a reasonably permissible as well as a practically valuable faith. If this should continue to be the case, after all fair metaphysical and other tests, we should then have surely earned the logical and moral right thus to believe. We may morally will to believe and to keep on believing as we must in order to be at our spiritual best, if and in so far as, in the light of all relevant knowledge, we can consistently do

so, and more especially if, by virtue of an intuitive faith, we already do so "in the bottom of our hearts."

This intuitive certitude we are not as yet, if indeed we ever shall be, able to transform, except progressively and always incompletely, into objective certainty. For one thing, we cannot *know* that God is great enough and good enough for our imperative need, until we have empirically verified knowledge to the effect that the existence of individuals of good will is conserved, without diminution of essential value, beyond the death of the body. This is something, however, which in the situation in which we find ourselves, we do not scientifically know, but which, at least so far as we have seen, we are logically permitted to believe; and there are not a few who are able to fill out the blank check of this formal permission with a specific intuitional certitude to the effect that what is thus apparently theoretically permissible is also an actual fact.

In summary, then, our normative science of an essentially Christian faith will be dogmatic, but not on the basis of any claim to absolute external authority; it will be intuitional, but not uncritical; and it will be pragmatic, not in any arbitrarily wilful or crudely utilitarian sense, but as having due regard for the highest rationally defensible spiritual values. Such a normative theology will be clearly distinguishable from the scientifically empirical theology of our earlier constructive discussion, as also from any purely philosophical, metaphysical theology which may be yet to be considered.

Normative theology, it must be conceded, even supplementing as it does so extensively the verified religious knowledge embodied in empirical theology, is not all there is or can be in the way of constructive theology. There is still to be considered the possible contribution of philosophy, and particularly of metaphysics to theology. In a sense our normative theology may be viewed as presenting a challenge to metaphysics, and at the same time it must prepare to meet an answering metaphysical challenge. Some attention must be given to this question of a possible metaphysical theology in a final chapter, before we can consider our discussion of the problem of religious knowledge concluded. For the present it may suffice to say that if and in so far as our religious intuition is found to harmonize with verified empirical knowledge and not to be disestablished by anything metaphysics is able to say, it would seem, in view of the spiritual value of an ethico-religious faith, that we can continue to exercise our intuitive faith in the reality of the God we need in order to live as we ought, and to exercise this faith and this critical will to believe as an ethical right.

Chapter XXI

METAPHYSICAL THEOLOGY

~~~~~

In his volume entitled *The Ways of Knowing* (Allen and Unwin, 1925), Professor W. P. Montague has listed and discussed six "ways of attaining knowledge," viz., authoritarianism, mysticism, rationalism, empiricism, pragmatism, and scepticism. Professor William Adams Brown, in his *Pathways to Certainty* (Scribners, 1930), reduces the number of "ways of testing belief" to four: "the way of Authority, the way of Reasoning, the way of Intuition, and the way of Experiment." Here the last two correspond roughly to what Montague calls mysticism and pragmatism, respectively. Referring to the way of sense-perception (Montague's "empiricism") and the way of doubt (Montague's "scepticism"), Dr. Brown remarks that they are "not so much independent methods as reminders of factors that we have to take into account in our use of the other four methods. Sense perception," he continues, "furnishes us with the primary material from which reasoning draws its inferences and to which intuition lends its meaning. Scepticism carries the method of experiment to its ultimate limit by systematically doubting everything that it is possible to doubt." With regard to the four methods he regards as all-comprehensive, he expresses the view that when these tests have been completed, "of that which remains . . . we may say with confidence, 'we know'" (*Op. cit.*, pp. 65-67).

This last proposition, we venture to think, may well be challenged. It would not be difficult to cite opinions supported by very respectable authority and tested in the other three ways as fully as was possible within the limits of the experience accessible at the time, which have nevertheless been disproved in the light of further experience later on. After all possible tests had been applied verification was still incomplete, so that future refutation was still a possibility. Dr. Brown's generally valuable discussion would have gained in incisiveness if he had been careful always to distinguish that objective certainty which is the rightful accompaniment of verified knowledge from that merely subjective certainty (better called certitude) of unverified propositions which, however supported by external authority, rationalization, imaginal intuition, or prag-

matic considerations, can never, without verification, amount to more than reasonable belief. Professor Brown does recognize the distinction between "the certainty of science, in which *so far as possible* all subjective elements have been eliminated and the certainty of common life, into which the factor of personal faith necessarily enters" (*Ibid.*, p. 12, italics mine). But without any terminological registering of this distinction, it seems not to have been kept sufficiently in mind throughout the discussion. And besides, in view of Dr. Brown's special interest in the religious bearings of the subject under discussion, it is important to note that this distinction between "the certainty of science" and "the certainty of common life" does not correspond at all closely to the distinction between secular science and religious thought. What we are thinking of primarily is not that there are commonly "subjective elements" in the theories of scientific men, but that it is possible to verify, logically and scientifically, some of the elements of religious faith.

Within these preliminary distinctions and statements of difference, however, we are prepared to accept, as a point of departure for our examination of the metaphysical test of religious claims of knowledge and of the right to believe, Dr. Brown's contention that "revelation is not to be thought of as a fifth way of reaching certainty," but that it is rather "our way of expressing our conviction that in each of the four ways God is speaking to us and that no account of his ways of revealing himself can be complete which does not take them all in" (*Ibid.*, pp. 78-79). We shall first develop our thought of religious revelation in connection with the four suggested "pathways to certainty"—or pathways to *certitude* and *toward* certainty. We shall then be in a position to consider the possibility of a metaphysic of revelation and the question of the epistemological value of a metaphysical development of theology.

The content of religious revelation must be either divine reality or religiously significant truth. Beginning with intuition as a source of revelation, we would recognize as religious discovery, and therewith as an uncovering or revealing of the divine, any adequately critical religious appreciation of reality (being, process, factor, subject) as absolute in value, worthy of our absolute devotion, or in other words, divine. Furthermore, we would recognize as revelation of the existence and causal efficacy of the divine any empirical verification of an hypothesis about a divinely functioning reality. In these two forms, the appreciative and the perceptual, religious intuition is, when adequately critical, a way to objective certainty and genuine religious knowledge. Imaginal religious intuition, however, can only be revelation when it happens to be true, and then only in the sense of religious (and possibly divinely caused) illumination, leading to the certitude of faith, but not to the certainty

of knowledge. No more than this can be said for the revelation-value of mystical certitude.

The other form of intuition, namely, the rational, might be included under either intuition or reason. Intuition of axiomatic truth may be surmised to be of religious significance ultimately, and so may be subsumed, tentatively, under the general psychological caption of (natural) revelation. Similarly, it may be that the discernment of logical relationships by virtue of the rational constitution of the individual mind will be found to have religious value and to lend itself to religious explanation in a final metaphysical theology. It should be noted, however, that what we can know about concrete reality by deductive reasoning alone is, in so far as it is stated in universal terms, hypothetical only. It can be transformed into categorical knowledge only by empirical verification. As for the dialectical method, in its extreme Hegelian form, in which it projects a synthesis of supposed contradictories, it too remains, apart from verification, purely hypothetical; at its best it serves to stimulate imaginal intuition and to guide toward verifying experience. In a less pretentious form, as a synthesis of the truth-elements in opposing systems of thought, the dialectic is a way of combining and systematizing what can be known or reasonably believed only on other grounds than the dialectical synthesis itself. As for the Kierkegaardian dialectic of frustration and paradox, that seems to be at best but a way of stating vividly a problem and then challenging further thought. In all these activities reason is fully natural, and it may possibly have revelation-significance for all that.

Turning now to "the way of experiment," this too is found to be a complex concept. It covers all cases of activity under the guidance of a trial-predicate or working hypothesis, and it may lead to refutation or to verification in first-hand experience, in which case something new is scientifically known, either negatively or positively; or it may lead simply to a kind of working which is useful for the purposes underlying the action and, so far, *as if* it were true, without its actual truth being thereby established. In other words, the experimental method may lead to scientific knowledge or simply to an experience of pragmatic working not amounting to scientific verification. In the former case what we have, especially when it occurs in religious experience, is, on the face of it, empirical discovery or revelation of divine reality; in the latter case, in so far as the hypothesis has been found both theoretically permissible and useful for morally good ends, there is a strengthening of the moral right to believe it to be true, and, especially in the case of religiously significant belief, a basis for the surmise that the thinker is being guided by a divinely constituted nature of things in the direction of truth, right, and the will of God.



As for authority as way of testing truth and gaining revelation, what can be reasonably held is simply that the only valid external authority is that of the expert, that is, the one who has intuited and thought out and tested and verified the truth for himself. Indirectly, through his verbal testimony, or through effects in his character, life, and influence, we may get the benefit, at second hand as it were, of his direct discovery (revelation) of the divine in and through his own religious experience and insight. Under these categories ample room can be found for the full revelation-significance of the historic Jesus and essential Christ. It remains only to see whether a reasonably tenable metaphysical theology can be worked out, according to which this and the other indicated religious appreciations of reality and intuitions of truth will reasonably appear not only as religiously significant human discovery, but as at the same time intentional revelation on the part of God.

In looking toward a metaphysical development of theology we must not close our eyes to this fact that in the very undertaking we are proposing to take the intuitive certitudes of religious faith as more or less tentative suggestions for a reasonable philosophy of reality. This is a course from which many religious persons, including some theologians, shrink. We have seen, for instance, with what misgiving some of the older and more conservative Ritschlians viewed the projected philosophical theology of Troeltsch and others of the younger generation. Being concerned for the certitude of faith, as well as for its doctrinal content, they seemed to fear that the delicate structures of religion and theology might not stand the rough treatment they were likely to receive at the hands of epistemology and metaphysics. More recently a similar opinion has found expression among both friends and foes of religion. "Religion cannot be tentative," says Pauck (*Karl Barth*, p. 6). "Without complete certainty," says Walter Lippmann, "religion does not offer genuine consolation" (*A Preface to Morals*, p. 49). On the other hand among deeply interested students of religion the opinion is being expressed that in these times religious faith may well and indeed should be tentative. "We have overstressed the extent to which religion needs certainty," says a recent writer (H. A. Bosley, *The Quest for Religious Certainty*, Willett, Clark, 1939, p. 8). "Theology should keep tentativeness and certainty in a polar relationship" (*Ibid.*, p. 118). It is Professor Wieman's judgment that "the apologist for religion should present all our most sacred beliefs and programmes of action as tentative and experimental" (*The Christian Century*, Dec. 18, 1929. Cf. E. A. Burtt, *Religion in an Age of Science*, Stokes, 1929, p. 138; *Types of Religious Philosophy*, 1939, pp. 461-472).

It is worth noting that this emphasis upon the necessarily tentative character of religious conviction comes to us in association with the theory that all values are merely functional, instrumental, and so pre-

sumably subject to change, tentative (Bosley, *op. cit.*, pp. 137, etc.). What needs to be seen at this point is that while some values are merely instrumental there are others which are intuitively appreciable as intrinsic, ultimate, and universally valid, whether universally appreciated or not. As for the tentativeness of faith and theology, it is but fair to concede, as William Adams Brown does, that "because God is known to us only in part, there must always be tentative elements in our thought of him" (*Op. cit.*, p. 211). But we must go even further than that, and freely admit that when the normative theology of religious faith is submitted to the test of metaphysics, it is a case of theology becoming temporarily tentative for the sake of becoming more objectively certain. If the final theoretical test of metaphysics were to be refused because of misgivings as to the probable result, the original naive certitude of faith would probably be lost, and that perhaps permanently. What is needed is not a permanent "polarity" and tension between certainty and tentativeness, such as is strongly suggested as underlying the Kierkegaardian and Barthian dialectic of the never-to-be-overcome antithesis; we need rather to experience the rhythmic progress from antithesis and tentativeness to synthesis and a recovered and more objective certitude. From certitude through tentativeness to certainty—that is the ideal for our faith and theology, as well as for the rest of our thought. And indeed there are many who have found it possible to retain, "in the bottom of their hearts," an abiding certitude of faith and hope, even while their theology was passing through the ordeal of metaphysical tentativeness.

Metaphysics may be defined as philosophy of reality, or, combining with this William James's incomplete descriptive definition, "an unusually obstinate attempt to think clearly and consistently" (*Psychology*, Briefer Course, Holt, p. 461) about the nature of reality in general and as a whole. In the course of its history various metaphysical methods have been employed. Speculative methods, or methods of rationalistic dogmatism, assuming that it ought to be possible to discover *a priori* what reality must be from what rationality is, have attempted either to deduce the general characteristics of reality in general and as a whole from a limited number of self-evident truths in accordance with the principles of logical inference, or else, beginning with any empirical observation to proceed in indefinitely continued progression by alternate negation and revised reaffirmation, in accordance with a necessary dialectic of pure thought, to an ever closer approximation to the absolute truth about absolute reality. The apparent failure of this pretentious method to bring its votaries to any agreed or even significant and logically tenable position has led many to conclude that the aim of metaphysics should be the more modest one of combining the more general

results of the various descriptive sciences in a comprehensive and self-consistent world-view, in the course of which undertaking a critical examination of the assumptions of the various sciences will be given a fundamental place. In general this metaphysical procedure seems defensible, but in actual practice it has proved disappointing. The grossly physical sciences having been developed first and most fully, there has been a tendency for the metaphysical synthesis of the recognized sciences to be unduly weighted on the materialistic side. It was a foregone conclusion, or would have been if the question had ever been raised, that nothing remotely resembling empirical theology would be included in the synthesis. But ordinarily not even religious intuition, nor any metaphysical implication of an ethical value (such as freedom as implied in the validity of obligation and responsibility) was allowed to have a place in the metaphysical resultant. Even the sciences of life and of personality, descriptive and normative, were refused their rightful place in helping to determine the metaphysical outcome; ethics was levelled down to psychology, psychology to biology, biology to physics, and to the old completely mechanistic physics at that. In protest against the ineptitude of both the rationalist and the empiricist types of metaphysics, attempts have been made to construct a critical world-view, based on values and their implications as well as upon general conclusions as to scientific fact. From this point of view metaphysics is bound to be of the nature of faith rather than knowledge. The lean kine of merely imaginal intuition have devoured the fat kine of empirical fact, and yet have seemed to the end almost as lean and subjective as before.

But perhaps something like that is what should have been expected. Metaphysics is a part of philosophy, and philosophy at its best is wisdom, not mere information. Let ascertained fact make its indispensable contribution. Let whatever can be logically concluded or even reasonably surmised from as wise and objective an estimate of values as can be made, be given due consideration. And last but not least, let the generalizations of empirical theology be given their rights along with those of the recognized empirical sciences, and the essential elements of normative theology along with those of other normative sciences and special branches of the philosophy of value. If religion has genuine validity, this is the part of rationality and true wisdom.

In the history of religion and philosophy there have been frequent outbreaks of antagonism between theology and metaphysics. After long periods of peaceful cooperation metaphysics has revolted against the tyrannical domination of theology, and in due time theology has reacted against the arrogant pretensions of metaphysics. The Cartesian break with scholasticism and the Ritschlian revolt against speculative theology will serve to illustrate these reactions respectively. There was mutual sus-

picion between faith and reason, between religion and philosophy, between theology and metaphysics. Each was motivated, in its reaction against the other, by the desire to safeguard both its content of doctrinal truth and its own peculiar brand of certainty. In the end, by the very extremity of the reaction, both theology and metaphysics suffered, both in their doctrinal content and with respect to their certainty (Cf. D. C. Macintosh, *The Reaction against Metaphysics in Theology*, Chicago, 1911, and "Die Wechselbeziehungen zwischen Theologie und Metaphysik," in *Luther, Kant, Schleiermacher in ihrer Bedeutung für den Protestantismus*, Festschrift für Georg Wobbermin, Berlin, 1939, pp. 286-315).

It was not without reason that metaphysics reacted against the old dogmatic, traditionalistic theology. And there were good practical motives for the reaction of theology against the old rationalistically dogmatic metaphysics. But both reactions were carried too far and continued too long. Philosophy needs religion, and religion can use philosophy. There is a "dependence of reason on intuition" and "intuition is dependent on reason" (J. L. Stocks, *Reason and Intuition*, Oxford, 1939, pp. 1-18). There is a proper function of theology in metaphysics, and a proper function of metaphysics in theology.

A theology rightly constructed on empirical religious knowledge and critical intuitional faith can suggest both problems and solutions of problems for metaphysical consideration. These problems and suggested solutions, along with those arising out of the recognized sciences, physical, biological and psychological, especially the problems arising in connection with the attempted synthesis of all these elements with one another and with whatever may be the metaphysical implications of the validity of moral and other presumably absolute values, furnish an ample grist for the metaphysical mill and its most "obstinate attempt to think clearly and consistently." But however much the generalizations of science may be incorporated in the final result, a metaphysical system, constructed as we have suggested, will be, as a total system, of the nature of reasonable faith rather than of verified knowledge, and so not essentially different from theology.

Most of the major problems of metaphysics have significance for theology, so that if one were aiming at a final synthesis of propositions pertinent to religious thought in a metaphysical theology he would do well to take up for consideration on their own account and in their theological bearings the principal metaphysical topics. This would be the task of theological metaphysics as distinguished from metaphysical theology. Inasmuch as our present work as a whole is in the field of epistemology and not of metaphysics, we cannot do more than bestow a brief passing glance on these metaphysical problems.

The problem as to whether reality is to be interpreted as being fundamentally made up of substances in processes or of processes in relation to which substances are dependent and adjectival, has come to the fore in recent philosophical discussion. If we take the interpretation of personality as a test case, it would seem that the newer tendency to express all substantial aspects in terms of mere process will hardly do justice to human self-consciousness. We seem to need both categories, and substance at least no less than process, for the interpretation of mind. There is a continuing self-identical subject which endures through all changing mental states. That we need both categories is only less obvious in relation to material reality. And as for the theological application, to reduce God to mere cosmic or primordial process is virtually to give up the idea of God as creatively active subject. Subject requires for its interpretation the category of substance, and activity requires that as well as the category of process.

The problem of mind and matter is often decided one-sidedly in terms of either materialism or mentalism. The former encounters great difficulty in the interpretation of mind, and the latter almost equal difficulty in the interpretation of matter. Obviously a God interpreted in terms of materialism would be, in its religious aspect, equivalent to atheism. It is often thought that not only can theology and religion accommodate themselves to mentalism, but that it is only in such philosophical terms that the validity of theism can be vindicated philosophically. That this is a great mistake is becoming evident in the light of the difficulty being experienced by personalistic theists in dealing with the problem of evil. If only mental or personal reality exists, and if traditional ideas of the intervention of a multitude of evil spirits or a practically omnipresent devil in human affairs be not favored, the only recourse from the personalistic point of view, seems to be either to maintain that any "evil" other than what man as a free agent causes is not evil but good, or else to posit a principle of evil in the personal nature of God, as Professor E. S. Brightman does (*The Problem of God*, Abingdon, 1930), and then attempt to save the worshipfulness and trustworthiness of God by making a most precarious distinction between God's good will and God's partly evil nature. In our opinion it is just as well to lend a favorable ear to common sense in this connection, taking the distinction between mind and matter as ultimate for metaphysics as well as for practical life. In its religious application this will mean that God is not all-inclusive mind; there is material reality which is irreducible to mind or to mere mental content, divine or human. There is a world for God which is not just part of his mental life, and it may be that while God, like man, is spirit, not body, there is nevertheless for God, as well as for man, an instrumentally functioning material body. What is meant to be sug-

gested is not crude anthropomorphism; rather is it that the vast physical cosmos is God's physical body.

The problem of causality and freedom has long been regarded as a hard nut to crack. There is not only a "dilemma of determinism" (W. James, *The Will to Believe*, pp. 145-183). There is the dilemma of either determinism or indeterminism. Man has a sense of moral obligation and responsibility, which is perhaps his noblest and most hopefully promising attribute; if it should prove necessary to regard it as fundamentally deceptive, the result would be disastrous for faith in the trustworthiness of God and so for religion as well as for morality. But if all events, including man's voluntary actions, are completely predetermined, how can man be fairly held responsible? On the other hand, if human conduct, in so far as it is not predetermined, is simply *undetermined*, uncaused, how can he be held responsible in this case either? The simple but generally overlooked way of escape from this dilemma of determinism or indeterminism would seem to be to invoke the category of creative self-determinism, not beforehand *in toto*, but to some extent *at the time*. All may be determined, but only partly predetermined, character as well as conduct being to some extent creatively determined in the very act of choice, and not simply before it or after it (See my article, "Responsibility, Freedom, and Causality," *Journal of Philosophy*, XXXVII, 1940, pp. 42-51).

What has been thus briefly indicated as a point of view with reference to three of the outstanding metaphysical problems will perhaps prove helpful toward the solution of other problems, such as those of causation between brain and consciousness, the alternative of creation or evolution, and that of mechanism or teleology. The theory of interaction, or causation both ways between brain-events and consciousness, seems indicated by the positions taken; as also the theory of creativity in evolution, to which Bergson gave such currency; and a synthetic view according to which cosmic and bodily mechanism come to be regarded as originally the product of purpose and of creatively evolving life, and as continuing, in general at least, to be instrumental to life and purpose, divine as well as human or finite.

Closely related to the foregoing problems and their probable solutions is the obviously religious and theological, but also metaphysical problem of the natural and the supernatural. The idea of an arbitrary, order-upsetting, miraculous intervention has come to seem full of difficulty for religion and theology as well as for science and philosophy. In fact the religious objections to the traditional notion of arbitrary intervention in external nature are perhaps even more fatal than those of science. It is the part of science to be open-minded and to describe the observed course of events, but it does not seem that science is always

competent to decide with absolute certainty either that a particular novel and un-understood event is or that it is not miraculous. Religion, on the other hand, while it is interested in revelation of a real and living God, actively at work for human well-being, would be distinctly embarrassed if it were required to believe that such divine activity occurred in such an undependable way as to suggest the partiality of God and the impossibility of a religiously satisfactory interpretation of what would be the fact that, while sometimes miracle was resorted to as a way of overcoming evil, ordinarily it is not employed and the evil is allowed to remain.

As for the metaphysical aspect of the question, it would seem that metaphysics has no peculiar access to the solution of such a question, beyond what may be suggested in the attempt to do full justice to the points of view of science and adequately critical religion. It would seem that what theological metaphysics has to say to metaphysical theology on this subject is something to the effect that, so far as it can see, it is theoretically permissible to believe in a creative divine activity, having revelation-value, within the field of human observation and experience; but that there is a presumption, both scientific and religious, in favor of the view that there is a dependableness about the conditions under which such divine creativity takes place, so that unordered, science-baffling, religion-embarrassing, miraculous interventions seem ruled out as improbable, as well as being scientifically unrecognizable even if they did happen.

Up to this point we have discussed the problem of the supernatural as if the term were associated exclusively with the miraculous. If, however, it be associated with the question of the existence of a superhuman reality or divine being, or with the idea of a dependable, non-arbitrary creativity such as we have referred to, or with the claim that there are absolute values to be appreciated over and above all merely "functional" and instrumental values as envisaged by "naturalism," then it would seem that there emerge in metaphysics no difficulties so fatal to the religious hypothesis as to inhibit the metaphysical theologian from undertaking to formulate a theory of the way in which a superhuman divine reality may be related to the world of our ordinary sense-experience.

The metaphysical problem of the possible immanence or necessary transcendence of personality, or spirit, in relation either to physical process or to other personal life, is one on which there is still much thinking needing to be done. Moral considerations give weight to the suggestion of an exclusive mutual transcendence of persons, except for such causal efficacy of one in the life of the other as is obviously involved in the undeniable fact of mutual influence. On the other hand religious concepts so fundamental and vital as those of grace, revelation, and di-

vine omniscience strongly suggest something more intimate than mere external causal interaction between God and man. The analogy of the immanence of the human spirit in the adaptive and purposive behavior of the human body suggests the possibility of a somewhat similar relationship between God as spirit and the cosmos as body. But if this be admitted as a defensible view, the question arises as to whether it is only in the physical realm, the realm of the lower values, that the divine, the absolutely worthwhile, is to be regarded as immanent and revealed, and not also in even so God-like a human personality and life as that of the historic Jesus. In general, then, in spite of the very unfinished state of metaphysical thinking on this subject, it would seem that the analogy of the psychophysical organism promises to throw some much-needed light upon the problem of immanence and transcendence in its theological aspects.

Before leaving the present subject two further remarks may be appended. So long as the divine reality is conceived in such a way as involves the use of the analogy of the conscious subject of experience, there must ever be an element of transcendence on the part of the divine being in relation to all reality in which it may be immanent. On the other hand, it is a speculative and not easily answered question, and yet perhaps it will prove in the end to be a very practical one, especially in connection with the problem of God's relation to physical evil, whether, somewhat as we are not consciously present in the causation of much that is transpiring in our physical organism, it may be that God too is in some real sense absent, *Deus absconditus*, rather than consciously and causally present, in nature's oftentimes ruthless destruction of high human values.

The metaphysical problem of the one and the many is of great importance for morality and religion, and it is in connection with such moral and religious aspects of the question that the metaphysics of the subject is delivered from the danger of degenerating into a largely verbal controversy. Viewed in these, its more practical aspects, the concept suggested by the values involved, as well as by the indicated solutions of other problems of theological metaphysics, is that the totality of reality may be as unified and organic as the meeting of religious need requires, while at the same time as pluralistic as the values of moral obligation and responsibility demand. The position indicated is somewhat between an absolute singularism, such as that of absolute idealism, and an absolute pluralism, such as would involve the denial of the presence and activity of the Spirit of God in the religious experience of men.

Such further metaphysical problems as those of the rational and the irrational, the absolute and the relative, the finite and the infinite, and the eternal and the temporal, have easily obvious religious and theological bearings. While, in the past, theism has shown a certain intelligible par-



tiality for the categories of the rational, the absolute, the infinite, and the eternal, there are not wanting signs that religion is receiving a certain amount of support, not only from metaphysics but even from science and logic, in its growing inclination to do fuller justice to the meanings suggested by the antithetical terms.

We have gone but a very little way into the problems of metaphysics in which religion and theology are interested, but far enough, perhaps, to justify the suggestion that it is the special task of theological metaphysics to hew out from the quarry of available fact and truth and give at least rough general shape to building stones which may be used in constructing the temple of metaphysical theology. In the latter discipline direct attack has to be made on the problem or problems of a reasonable philosophical interpretation of such fundamental theological concepts as God, revelation, Christology, salvation, providence (including theodicy), and immortality.

It is thus the function of theology in metaphysics to suggest new problems and give a new tang to old problems, and to make contributions not only to the content but possibly also to the certainty of metaphysics. On the other hand it is the function of metaphysics to give a more reasonably defensible content (by way of both addition and subtraction) and a more rational certainty to theology. Theology and metaphysics have done each other much harm from time to time in the past; but that was largely because of the faulty methods employed by the one or the other, or by both. But for the best results in either field, given the use of the right method on both sides, theology and metaphysics are mutually indispensable.

It is not, however, the lot of the epistemological Moses to enter into the promised land of metaphysical theology, but only to lead the philosophical pilgrim to a place where he can from a distance "view the landscape o'er." Actually to enter in and take possession of that goodly land is the part reserved for some metaphysical Joshua, who, as he faces the arduous enterprise, must needs be "strong and very courageous." In bringing to a close our long journeying through what no doubt will have seemed to the reader the wilderness of contemporary thought on the problem of religious knowledge, it remains only to express the writer's conviction that in the main the problems of theology, empirical, normative, and metaphysical, will not in the end prove too difficult for the honest and painstaking religious mind; that while there may be much that will pass temporarily out of certitude into tentativeness, there will be no need to despair of the possibility of further progress from such temporary tentativeness into a reasonable and more objective reassurance; that a certain limited but highly important body of re-

ligious knowledge is possible for us; and, for the rest, that not only in the end, after our excursion into metaphysics, but before and throughout the whole process, within the limits of what is psychologically and logically possible in view of accessible facts, we have the moral right to believe as we must, if we are to live as we ought.

THE END

## INDEX OF SUBJECTS

- 
- Absolute, the, 23-26, 80, 159, 231-233, 235,  
     296-298, 314, 349  
 Absorption, 23-26  
 Agnosticism, Chap. XIV; 48, 143, 216, 218,  
     277, 282-283, 291, 293-294  
 Anthropocentrism, 238-242, 265, 267, 278,  
     299, 326, 345, 364  
 Apologetics, 99-100, 267-268, 274, 312, 323,  
     329, 347  
 Apriori, religious, 286-289, 297-298  
 Atheism, 48-49, 50, 57-59, 130-131, 134-135,  
     139, 140, 141, 143, 145, 318: Chaps.  
     IV-X, *passim*  
 Authority, 308-310, 328, 370  
 Autohypnosis, 34-38  
  
 Bible, the, 337, 343  
  
 Certitude, 31-38, 76, 206-207, 257, 278, 362,  
     369, 370, 373-374  
 Christianity, 281  
 Christology, 51-52, 99, 110, 138, 139, 152,  
     199, 240, 244, 246, 254-255, 258-259,  
     267, 279, 295, 330-331, 340, 341, 365-  
     368  
 Church, the, 184, 194, 208  
 Creation, 235, 352, 378  
 Cynicism, 144, 146  
  
 Demonic, the, 349, 350, 353  
 Dialectic, 328, 338-339, 347, 374  
 Doubt, 307-308, 373-374  
 Dualism, logical, 260  
 Dualistic realism, 4, 11-12, 185, 198-199;  
     Chaps. XIII-XIX  
  
 Empiricism, immediate, Chap. VI, esp.  
     88-95  
     religious, 283-285, 287, 294; Chaps. XI,  
     XII. *See* Mysticism  
 Epistemology, 1, 2-4, 11, 84-88, 244-250  
 Eschatology, 341, 350  
 Evangelism, 344  
 Evil, 26-28, 105-106, 109, 110, 112, 118, 315,  
     353  
 Existential judgments, 251-253, 264, 266,  
     364  
  
 "Existential thinking," 332-333, 348  
 Experience, Chap. VI, esp. 89, 91, 92  
     religious, 218, 219, 236-240, 323-324, 338:  
     Chaps. II, III, XI, XII  
 Experimentalism in religion, 189-191, 370  
  
 Faith, 6, 7, 168-169, 240, 278, 307-317, 320,  
     321, 323, 331, 334, 342: Chap. XX  
 Fictionalism, 53-54, 67, 72, 144  
 Freedom, 352, 378  
  
 God, definitions of, 18-21, 148, 164-173, 209,  
     237: Chap. XI  
     existence of, 15, 17, 59, 98, 103, 106, 107,  
     108, 109, 110, 112, 114, 315, 334;  
     Chaps. XI, XIII. *See* Theism  
     experience of, 16-17, 21-22, 33, 44: Chap.  
     XII  
     nature of, 18-21, 51-52, 57-58, 80, 99, 105-  
     106, 110, 126, 154-156, 193, 209, 240-  
     241, 298, 318, 334, 351, 359-360  
 God-idea, Chaps. IV, VII, VIII  
 Guidance, divine, 207  
  
 Health, 204, 208  
 Herd-instinct, 76-78  
 Holy, the, 149, 170, 176-177, 184-185, 212,  
     300-303  
 Holy Spirit, 202, 209, 360  
 Humanism, religious, Chaps. VI-IX  
  
 Idealism, absolute, 32  
     logical, 147-156  
     logical-psychological, 156-160  
     mystical, 21-23  
     the new, 156-160  
     psychological, Chaps. IV-IX  
 Idealistic monism, 4, 11, 47: Chaps. IV-X  
 Illusion, 50, 98, 104-105, 108-109, 345-346  
 Immortality, 333-334  
 Immediacy, 16-17  
 Ineffableness, 17-21  
 Inferiority, 66-68  
 Initiative, divine, 345  
 Intellectualism, 51-52, 250, 304-305  
 Introversion, 16, 69-70

- Intuition, 5-7, 33-34, 185-187, 259, 296-299, 304-305, 316, 319, 324, 370, 372, 376; Chap. XX  
 Irrationalism, 232-233, 294, 301-303; Chap. XIX  
 Jesus, 261, 330-331, 341, 342, 346, 365-367. *See* Christology  
 Joy, religious, 206  
 Knowledge, 1, 7, 8, 85-88, 102, 370  
     religious, 9-11, 15, 17-22, 37-38, 102, 163, 228, 238, 242, 271, 278, 296, 369  
 Laws of religious experience, Chap. XII, esp. 202-209  
 Liberalism in religion, 344  
 Love, Christian, 206, 351  
 Metaphysical problems, 377-381  
 Metaphysics and theology, 107-108, 110, 201, 243, 249, 250, 256-257, 269, 289-291, 369; Chap. XXI  
 Methodology, theological, 9, 19, 132, 243-244, 267-270, 273-278, 289-294, 313-314, 321, 333, 337, 339, 369; Chaps. XI, XII, XX, XXI  
 Miracle, 239, 279, 285, 327, 331, 342-343, 346-347, 350, 360  
 Monistic idealism, Part II  
 Monistic realism, critical, 4, 6, 11, 44; Chaps. XI, XII  
     extreme, 3-4, 11; Chaps. II, III  
 Mysticism, Chaps. II, III; 59, 178-181, 257-259, 284, 287, 310-311, 370  
 Natural theology, 347; Chap. XXI  
 Numinous, the *See* Holy  
 Omnipotence, 57-58, 368-369  
 Optimism, moral, 229, 323  
 Pansexuality, 41, 60-66, 69-70  
 Pantheism, 237-238  
 Pathology and religion, 38-41, 332; Chap. V  
 Peace, religious, 205-206  
 Perseverance, 204  
 Pessimism, 144-146  
 Phenomenalism, 234-235  
 Positivism, 80-81, 233-234  
 Postulates, theology of, 265-266, 272, 313, 319  
 Pragmatism, essential, 304-306  
     instrumental, and religion, 306; Chaps. VI-VIII  
 Pragmatism—(*Continued*)  
     religious, 51-54, 100-101, 151, 277-278, 364, 370; Chap. XVIII  
     representational, 322  
     varieties of, 305-306  
 Prayer, 202-203, 240  
 Projection, 77-78  
 Psychology of religion, 49, 51, 78, 108-109, 113, Chaps. IV, V  
 Psychotherapy, religious, 72-73, 208  
 Quietism, 29-31, 344  
 Rationalism in religion, Chap. XVII; 286-294, 297-298  
 Rationalization, 31-33, 77, 84-85, 95, 186, 308, 311, 315-316, 319, 325, 327  
 Realism, 3-6, 11-12, 173-184, 317-318, 349; Chaps. II, III, XI-XXI. *See* Dualistic realism; Monistic realism  
     naïve, 90-91  
 Reason, 316, 319, 329, 334, 376; Chaps. XVII, XXI  
 Redemption, 262  
 Regeneration, 203-204, 240, 331-332  
 Religio-historical school, 281, 284  
 Religio-historical theology, 284, 289-290  
 Religion, 79-80, 132-133, 270, 315, 320, 339-340; Chaps. II, III, V, VII. *See* Experience, religious  
 Revelation, 231, 239, 248-249, 254-259, 264-265, 267, 268, 270, 284-286, 295-296, 330, 371; Chaps. II, III, XI, XII, XIX, XX  
 Sanctification, 294-295, 240  
 Science: scientific method, 2, 6, 9-10, 68, 76, 102, 145, 210-213, 260, 267, 271, 307, 313-314, 317, 320-321, 322, 371, 372, 375; Chap. XII  
 Sin, conviction of, 205  
     original, 328, 330  
 Social conception of religion, 54-56, 113-114, 122, 129, 130, 132, 208-209  
 Subconscious, the, 42, 324-325  
 Supernatural, the, 183-184, 378-379. *See* Miracle  
 Supernaturalism, 82-83, 106, 283-285  
 Supramundane, 97-98, 107, 116, 262-263, 269  
 Symbolism, 7, 50, 52, 68-71, 74, 99, 100, 103-104, 116, 120-125, 128, 137-139, 151, 157, 158, 298-299, 300, 349-350, 362-363

- Theism, 127; Chaps. VII, XIII  
 arguments for.  
     anthropological, 222  
     axiological, 225-229  
     cosmological, 222  
     ontological, 220-222  
     religio-empirical, 15-17, 179-187, 192-193, 209. *See* God, existence of  
     teleological, 164-170, 222-225  
 Theocentric theology, 267, 326, 330, 337, 345  
 Theopantism, 31, 32  
 Time, 22-23, 354  
 Totemism, 55, 61-63  
 Transcendence, 274-275, 326, 330, 335, 337, 338, 341, 359, 379-380: Chap. XIX.  
     *See* Dualism, *see* Realism  
 Truth, 1-2, 9, 116-117, 276, 304-305  
 Unconscious, the, 42  
 Values, value-judgments, valuational theology, 8, 9, 149-150, 163-164, 266, 289-290, 358, 363-364: Chaps. XV, XVI  
 Verification, 6, 187, 313, 317, 320-321, 372  
 Will to believe, 309-311, 312-314, 315-316, 323, 335, 364, 365, 382



## INDEX OF NAMES

- 
- Ackerman, H. C., 126  
 Adams, E. T., 94-95  
 Adler, A., 41, 64, 66-68, 69, 72, 74, 75  
 Adler, F., 309  
 Ainslie, D., 157  
 Albertus Magnus, 16, 34  
 Althaus, P., 350  
 Amelios, 22  
 Ames, E. S., 74, 111, 113, 120, 121-125, 129, 130, 133  
 Angela of Foligno, 17, 19, 23, 25, 27, 34  
 Angell, J. R., 82  
 Angelus Silesius, 25  
 Aquinas, St. Thomas, 219, 220  
 Aristotle, 9, 219, 266  
 Aubrey, E. E., 56  
 Auer, J. A. C. F., 142  
 Augustine, St., 19  
 Aulén, G., 327, 350-351  
 Avenarius, R., 273  
 Ayres, C. E., 145  
  
 Baba Kuhl, 26  
 Bacon, F., 9  
 Baillie, J., 181-182, 227-229, 340  
 Balfour, A. J., 226, 307-309, 310, 314  
 Barrett, C., 318  
 Barth, K., 327, 335-348, 349, 351, 361, 374  
 Baynes, C. F., 71  
 Beard, C. A., 86  
 Bender, W., 51, 244, 247  
 Bennett, C. A., 44, 179  
 Berdyaev, N., 220, 327, 351-354  
 Bergson, H., 180-181, 327, 352  
 Berkeley, G., 159, 223  
 Bernouilli, C. A., 285  
 Bertocci, P. A., 225  
 Bewkes, E. G., 192  
 Bixler, J. S., 192, 310, 352  
 Bles, G., 352  
 Boehme, J., 17, 20, 22, 26, 34, 35, 352  
 Bois, H., 323-325  
 Bonaventura, St., 24  
 Boodin, J. E., 317-318  
 Bornhausen, K., 287-288  
 Bosley, H. A., 373, 374  
 Bottomley, J., 20  
  
 Bousset, W., 285, 288-289, 297  
 Brandt, R. B., 242  
 Brightman, E. S., 377  
 Brill, A. A., 74  
 Brown, W. A., 370-371, 374  
 Brown, W. M., 136-139  
 Brunner, E., 327, 335-347, *passim*  
 Bultmann, R., 335  
 Burgh, W. G. de, 183  
 Burke, R. M., 28  
 Burt, E. A., 357-358, 373  
 Burwash, N., 188  
 Butler, J., 79  
  
 Calhoun, R. L., 223, 225  
 Calvin, J., 337, 344, 373  
 Carlyle, T., 177  
 Carr, H. W., 156, 157, 158, 159, 160  
 Carver, T. N., 322  
 Case, S. J., 56  
 Catherine of Genoa, St., 17, 19, 25, 27, 30, 34  
 Catherine of Siena, St., 19  
 Clarke, W. N., 186  
 Clutton-Brock, A., 165  
 Coc, G. A., 8, 35, 43, 202  
 Comte, A., 80-81, 233-234  
 Cook, E. A., 321-322  
 Cornford, F. M., 123  
 Crespi, A., 158  
 Croce, B., 156-159  
 Cross, G., 155, 237-241  
  
 Dakin, A. H., 142, 179, 180  
 Darwin, C., 137, 138, 222, 235  
 Darwin, F., 235  
 Davidson, R. F., 303  
 Descartes, R., 375  
 DeWette, W. M. L., 246, 299  
 Dewey, J., 79-96, 115, 120, 134, 175, 197, 320  
 Dietrich, J. H., 139-141  
 Dilthey, W., 272, 273, 282, 293  
 Dionysius (Pseudo-), 19, 21, 24, 27  
 Dostoevsky, F. M., 336  
 Dru, A., 328  
 Drummond, H., 188

- Duhm, B., 282  
 Durkheim, E., 54-56, 123  
  
 Ecke, G., 245, 291  
 Eckhart, Meister, 16, 17, 19, 21, 22, 24, 27, 30  
 Eddy, Mary B. G., 32  
 Edward, K., 192  
 Edwards, J., 205  
 Ellis, H., 74  
 England, F. E., 185  
 Erasmus, D., 291  
 Eucken, R., 294  
  
 Feldman, W. T., 94  
 Fenn, W. W., 111, 115, 192, 196  
 Ferm, V., 167, 192, 327  
 Ferré, N. F. S., 351  
 Feuerbach, L., 48-50, 336, 345, 346  
 Flint, R., 267  
 Foster, G. B., 97-119, 126, 127, 139, 140  
 Francis de Sales, St., 16, 17, 26, 34  
 Francis of Assisi, St., 24  
 Frank, F. H. R., 186, 244  
 Frazer, J. G., 66  
 Freud, S., 41, 60-66, 68  
 Fries, J. K., 289, 297, 299, 300  
 Frischeisen-Koehler, M., 274  
  
 Galloway, G., 192, 195  
 Garrigou-Lagrange, R., 219  
 Garvie, A. E., 245  
 Geiger, J. R., 125-126  
 Gentile, G., 156, 159-160  
 Gifford, Lord, 347  
 Gilson, E., 219  
 Gogarten, F., 335, 336, 338  
 Guyon, J. M., 16, 20, 26, 28, 31, 34, 35, 39  
  
 Hadfield, J. A., 71  
 Haecker, T., 327, 332, 333  
 Haering, T., 247, 256, 291  
 Hamilton, Sir W., 230, 233  
 Hankey, D., 312  
 Harnack, A., 250  
 Hartt, J. N., 222  
 Harvey, J. W., 210-211  
 Hastie, W., 238  
 Haydon, A. E., 127-131, 132, 133  
 Hegel, G. W. F. (and Hegelianism), 48, 80, 81, 158, 159, 219, 243, 282, 327, 328, 330, 331, 338, 349, 372  
 Heim, 327, 350, 354  
 Herbart, J. F., 246  
 Herman, E., 16  
 Herrmann, W., 182, 246, 256-261, 262, 263, 274, 291, 336, 366  
 Hicks, G. Dawes, 92  
  
 Hilton, W., 34  
 Hocking, W. E., 43, 44, 69, 179, 186, 221, 305, 311  
 Hoeffding, H., 103, 116  
 Hollander, L. M., 329, 330, 332, 333  
 Holmes, R. W., 160  
 Horton, D., 336  
 Horton, W. M., 192, 200, 202, 351  
 Hugel, F. von, 179-180  
 Hume, D., 283, 331  
 Husayn ibn Mansur, 26  
 Hutcheon, R. J., 142  
 Huxley, T. H., 233, 234  
  
 Inge, W. R., 35, 154-155, 156, 250  
  
 Jalaluddin Rumi, 28  
 James, H., 309  
 James, W., 35, 80, 81, 115, 117, 276, 277, 284, 286, 307, 309-314, 321, 374, 378  
 Jaspers, K., 352  
 Jeffries, R., 29, 35  
 John of the Cross, St., 16, 20, 22, 25, 28, 34, 35  
 Johnson, H. W., 113-114, 140  
 Jones, R. M., 20, 178  
 Julian of Norwich, 25, 27, 35  
 Jung, C. G., 41, 60, 64, 68-73, 74, 75, 208  
  
 Kaehler, M., 349  
 Kaempffert, W., 65  
 Kaftan, J., 115, 246, 266-270, 272, 273, 282, 291, 293  
 Kant, I. (and Kantianism), 115, 151, 152, (176), 182, 194, 198, 199, 221, 222, 226, 228, 230, 233, 239, 242, 243, 246, 247, 251, 253, 254, 263, 266, 281, 283, 286, 287, 288, 289, 290, 293, 296, 297, 300, 333, 336, 337, 348, 349, 352  
 Kattenbusch, F., 244, 291  
 Keirstead, W. C., 245  
 Kierkegaard, S., 327-333, 337, 338, 348, 349, 372, 373, 374  
 King, I., 120-121  
 King, W. P., 142  
 Knox, G. W., 53  
 Knudson, A. C., 192, 193, 194, 195, 196, 197, 200, 201  
 Koehler, W., 94  
 Koffka, K., 94  
 Krumbine, M. H., 56  
 Krutch, J. W., 142, 144-146  
 Kutter, H., 336  
  
 Laird, J., 212-213  
 Lake, K., 155-156  
 Law, W., 16  
 Lee, J. W., 188



- Lee, V., 309, 314  
 Lehmann, E., 22  
 Leibniz, G. W., 319  
 LeRoy, E., 51-53  
 Lester-Garland, L. V., 180  
 Leuba, J. H., 43, 50-51, 108, 122  
 Lewes, G. H., 234  
 Lichtenberger, F., 239  
 Lippmann, W., 142-144, 146, 373  
 Lipsius, R. A., 264-266, 267, 270, 271, 273  
 Locke, J., 222  
 Lotze, R. H., 243, 244, 246, 247, 249, 270, 241  
 Lovejoy, A. O., 90  
 Lowrie, W., 327, 328, 329, 330, 331, 332, 333  
 Loyola, I., 33  
 Luedemann, H., 149, 248, 253, 256, 264, 265  
 Luthardt, C. E., 244  
 Luther, M., 291, 337  
 Lyman, E. W., 185-186, 188, 245, 248, 249, 320-321  
  
 Macaulay, A. B., 245  
 Machen, J. G., 327  
 Mackintosh, H. R., 237, 245, 260  
 Maier, H., 50  
 Mansel, H., 230-233, 235, 236  
 Martin, E. D., 73-75  
 Martineau, H., 80  
 Marx, K., 138  
 Mathews, S., 56, 57, 164, 188  
 Matthews, W. R., 78  
 Mayer, E. W., 291  
 McConnachie, J., 335, 336, 343  
 McDougall, W., 41, 63-64, 67, 69  
 McGiffert, A. C., 151-152  
 McGiffert, A. C., Jr., 152  
 McTaggart, J. M. E., 57-59  
 Mead, G. H., 80, 89, 91, 92  
 Means, P. B., 336  
 Meland, B. E., 175, 191  
 Menzel, T., 275  
 Meyerson, A., 65  
 Milburn, R. G., 192  
 Mill, J. S., 10, 194, 233, 234  
 Miller, D. S., 312, 314  
 Molinos, M. de, 20, 30  
 Montague, M. P., 20, 28  
 Montague, W. P., 185, 317, 370  
 Morrison, C. C., (131), 134, 167  
 Muir, M. M. P., 188  
 Muirhead, J. H., 92  
 Munro, R., 237  
 Münsterberg, H., 149-150  
 Murray, G., 76-77  
 Murry, J. M., 59  
  
 Nathan, G. J., 142, 146  
 Natorp, P., 148-149  
 Nelson, L., 297  
 Newton, I., 352  
 Newton, J. F., 124, 140, 173  
 Niebuhr, H. R., 177, 192, 348  
 Niebuhr, R., 300, 350  
 Nietzsche, F., 112  
 Noble, E., 224  
 Nygren, A., 327, 351  
  
 Olawsky, 246  
 Oman, J., 183-185  
 Orchard, W. E., 327  
 Orr, J., 244  
 Otto, M. C., 77, 134-135  
 Otto, R., 31, 73, 170, 184, 287, 295, 297-303, 336, 348, 349  
  
 Pascal, B., 312  
 Pauck, W., 336, 373  
 Paul, St., 18, 279, 322, 360, 361  
 Peirce, C. S., 305  
 Perry, R. B., 93, 159, 309, 310  
 Pfennigsdorf, E., 244  
 Pfleiderer, O., 244, 245  
 Pius X., 53  
 Plato, 153, 154, 155, 156  
 Plotinus, 18, 22, 24, 33  
 Poincaré, J. H., 54  
 Pokorny, 246  
 Potter, C. F., 139, 140, 141-142  
 Pratt, J. B., 192, 194, 196, 197, 199, 201, 313  
  
 Quick, O. C., 342, 351  
  
 Ragaz, L., 336  
 Ramakrishna, 22, 26, 28, 29, 36  
 Rank, O., 65, 68, 74  
 Rashdall, H., 226-227  
 Rauwenhoff, L. W. E., 50  
 Reese, C. W., 139, 140, 141  
 Reischle, M., 246, 254-255, 256  
 Richard of St. Victor, 34  
 Ritschl, A. (and Ritschlianism), 51, 115, 149, 152, 165, 243-250, 251, 253, 254, 255, 256, 263, 264, 270, 273, 274, 281, 282, 283, 289, 293, 299, 336, 349, 373, 375  
 Ritschl, O., 243, 244, 247, 250-255, 256  
 Rivers, W. H. R., 41, 64-65, 69  
 Robinson, D. S., 275  
 Rogers, A. K., 194, 318-320  
 Rolston, H., 337  
 Rowe, G. T., 192  
 Rowland, E. H., 314-316  
 Royce, J., 80, 115, 194  
 Rümelin, 246

- Russell, B., 152-154  
 Ruysbroeck, J. van, 16, 19, 22, 24, 30  
  
 Santayana, G., 151  
 Savery, W., 304  
 Schaefer, E., 278, 337, 345  
 Schaub, E. L., 192, 194, 196, 200  
 Scheibe, M., 270-272, 296  
 Schelling, F. W. J., 348-349  
 Schiller, F. C. S., 188, 316-317  
 Schleiermacher, D. E., 53, 185, 230, 236-242, 243, 244, 246, 267, 276, 277, 278, 282, 283, 286, 289, 299, 301, 336, 340, 346  
 Schneider, H. W., 134  
 Schoen, H., 244  
 Schultz, H., 246  
 Scotus Erigena, 21, 27  
 Scudder, D. L., 223  
 Scullard, H. H., 192, 195, 199  
 Selbie, W. B., 237  
 Sellars, R. W., 131-133  
 Siebeck, H., 116, 262-264  
 Simmel, G., 147-148  
 Singh, Sadhu Sundar, 20  
 Slosson, E. E., 305  
 Smart, J. D., 200  
 Smith, G. B., 110, 127, 165, 188-189, 190, 192, 194, 195, 196, 200, 201  
 Smith, N. Kemp, 181, 224  
 Smith, T. V., 133-134  
 Smuts, J. C., 224  
 Somerset, Lady H., 362  
 Sorley, W. R., 227  
 Spencer, H., 82, 110, 230, 231, 233-236  
 Spengler, O., 335, 336  
 Spiess, P., 288  
 Spinoza, B., 53  
 Staehlin, L., 244  
 Stearns, L. F., 186  
 Strong, A. L., 306  
 Suskind, H., 295  
 Suso, H., 25, 33  
 Swain, J. W., 54  
 Swedenborg, E., 34  
 Swenson, D. F., 329  
  
 Tansley, A. G., 77-78  
 Tauler, J., 17, 19, 21, 25, 27, 30  
  
 Taylor, A. E., 227  
 Tennant, F. R., 223, 224, 225  
 Tennyson, A., 35  
 Teresa, St., 16, 20, 21, 23, 25, 28, 30, 34, 40  
 Tertullian, 329  
 Thomas, G. F., 192  
 Thomson, G. T., 338  
 Thorndike, E. L., 94  
 Thurneysen, E., 335, 343  
 Tillich, P., 303, 327, 348-350, 354  
 Tracy, F., 65  
 Traub, F., 244, 246, 275-276, 291  
 Troeltsch, E., 198, 199, 276, 277, 281-294, 296, 333, 336, 343, 348, 349, 373  
 Trotter, W., 75-77  
 Tsunashima, R., 26  
 Tyrrell, G., 188  
  
 Unamuno, M. de, 327, 333-335  
 Underhill, E., 178  
 Urban, W. M., 84, 314  
  
 Vaihinger, H., 53-54, 67, 68, 74, 151, 242, 305  
 Vaughan, R., 37  
 Vaughan, R. A., 43  
 Volkelt, J., 296-297  
  
 Waterhouse, E. S., 192  
 Watson, J. B., 74, 94  
 Wells, H. G., 113  
 Wendland, J., 245  
 Wesley, C., 177  
 Whitehead, A. N., 220, 222, 225, 362  
 Whitman, W., 28  
 Wieman, H. N., 131, 134, 165-173, 175, 191, 221, 373  
 Windelband, W., 149, 282, 289  
 Wobbermin, G., 192, 198, 199, 272-280, 282, 291-292, 296, 336  
 Woods, F. A., 189-190  
 Wordsworth, W., 252  
 Wright, W. K., 199-200  
 Wundt, W., 277  
  
 Youtz, H. A., 188











UNIVERSAL  
LIBRARY



130 767

UNIVERSAL  
LIBRARY